A PASSION FOR PURITY: ELLICE HOPKINS AND THE POLITICS OF GENDER IN THE LATE-VICTORIAN CHURCH

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ABSTRACT

Gender analysis is at the forefront of scholarly interest in religious studies and history. As yet, however, little attempt has been made to synthesize the insights of each field. This thesis contends that the late-Victorian movement for social purity provides an illustrative example of how religion, in both its institutional and popular forms, has operated historically as a major site of the production of gender knowledge. The thesis has a double axis. First, a recovery of the life and work of the Anglo-Catholic spinster Jane Ellice Hopkins (1836-1904), whose significance as a religious and moral theorist has been entirely overlooked. Second, the promotion of British religion and gender history as an academic area of research.

Churchwomen were prominent contributors to the articulation of prescriptive moral norms of femininity and masculinity in the 1880s and 1890s. I examine Hopkins' activism within the context of a vibrant female purity culture, in order to depict the way in which considerations of gender can enhance our understanding of late nineteenth-century church history, and equally, how sustained attention to religion as a major historical variable can significantly revise our existing picture of feminist campaigns surrounding sexual morality. The thesis is divided into four parts. In Part 1, I outline the theoretical complexities in the construction of religion and gender history, and suggest future directions for research by critically analysing a range of existing methodological paradigms. Part 2 outlines Hopkins' background and career details and establishes the historical origins and context of the social purity movement. Detailed textual analyses of Hopkins' purity pamphlets through which she formulated her constructions of female and male sexuality comprise Part 3 of the study. Finally, in Part 4, I conclude with an exploration of the late-Victorian debates surrounding marriage and the family, and demonstrate Hopkins' remarkable creativity as a radical woman theologian.

DECLARATION

This thesis represents my own work on "Ellice Hopkins and the Politics of Gender in the Late-Victorian Church", under the supervision of Professor Ursula King in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies. The views contained in this thesis are the views of the author and not those of either the Department or the University.

Susan Elizabeth Morgan.

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This thesis is dedicated to the memory of Kathy Keay ,

student, poet and

a true woman of the spirit.

CONTENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations that appear in the text or endnotes:

CD Acts	Contagious Diseases Acts.
CEPS	Church of England Purity Society.
CLA Act	Criminal Law Amendment Act.
CPA	Church Penitentiary Association.
ISA Act	Industrial Schools Amendment Act.
JDPR	*Journal for the Defence of Personal Rights*
LACFG	Ladies Association for the Care of Friendless Girls.
LNA	Ladies National Association.
MRU	Moral Reform Union.
NUWW	National Union of Women Workers.
NVA	National Vigilance Association.
PRA	Personal Rights Association.
WCA	White Cross Army.
WCL	White Cross League.
WCS	White Cross Society.
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association.

INTRODUCTION

The novelist George Gissing once described the 1880s and 1890s as decades of "sexual anarchy".[1] Social codes governing Victorian moral respectability during this period were indeed in an unprecedented state of flux. These were the years of numerous divorce scandals; the increasingly publicized commercialization of sex; the Jack the Ripper murders; the rise of the women's movement; the emergence of the aesthete-decadent as personified in the Oscar Wilde case; the pathologization of homosexuality, and intellectual speculations on the mutability of gender.[2] Mounting anxiety at the disassociation of sexuality from procreation and an apparently seething counterculture of vice at the centre of the nation's largest cities engendered a passionate response by concerned moralists. This was the era of the movement for *social purity,* a powerful religious lobby-group who sought to stem the tide of profligacy by re-encoding norms of Christian marital heterosexuality with a series of demands for restrictive moral legislation and censorship issued from the pulpit and the press.

From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, generations of women in succession constructed and gave public articulation to alternative interpretations of sexual difference. These interpretations were, at certain historical moments, able to radically subvert the dominant male discourses of churchmen, politicians and medical experts. The career of Jane Ellice Hopkins (1836-1904) was one such moment.[3] Viewed largely as representative of the moral offensive of the 1880s, Hopkins has been cast by historians as one of the leading exponents of social purity from the 1870s onwards. The overall pronouncement of her contribution to moral reform has not been an auspicious one. She has been depicted variously as a sentimental and impressionable rescuer of prostitutes, the perpetrator of "a massive propagandist assault on...the sexual habits of the poor"[4] and a threat to the integrity of the liberal feminist platform. The more favourable accounts of her work such as those by Kathleen Heasman and Frank Prochaska have tended to

emphasize her pioneering philanthropic methods without reference to the wider religious or political context in which she moved.[5] Consequently, these readings have done little to modify the dominant interpretive ethos of critical suspicion which has surrounded Hopkins' career as a moral reformer.

Hopkins' historical notoriety and its specific relation to her religious standpoint provided the original impetus for this thesis. I first came upon her name as an undergraduate student through Judith Walkowitz' seminal text *Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, Class and the State* (1980). Following Walkowitz' cogently argued case, I dismissed Hopkins and the social purity campaign as a salient historical example of the conservatizing, oppressive impact of evangelical religious affiliation upon nineteenth-century feminist moral reform. Several years later, and less convinced by sweeping indictments of the revivalist religious dimensions of social purity as some undifferentiated, monolithic historical force, the little-known and highly controversial figure of Ellice Hopkins appeared an appropriate case-study through which to test out the historical complexities of the faith/feminism dialectic at its most acute. In so doing, I also aimed to delineate the broader pertinence of religion as a critical analytical category in gender history.

Theoretical considerations aside, my research will demonstrate that Hopkins was an individual worthy of historical attention in her own right whose significance as a sexual and moral theorist and as a political mobilizer of churchwomen has been unjustifiably neglected. This thesis presents the first ever sustained piece of research undertaken on her writings and activism. To date, the brief references to her work have formed part of larger topics such as the history of nineteenth-century philanthropy, anti-vice agitation or the feminist campaigns around sexuality. The lengthiest discussions of her role, to be found in the texts of Edward Bristow, Frank Mort and Sheila Jeffreys, comprise no more than a few pages.[6] A recent article by Melissa Raphael which has the merit of focusing

solely upon Hopkins, takes a self-confessed non-historical approach in the retrieval of the sacerdotal and mythical elements of her brothel-visitations and establishment of rescue homes.[7] I combine contemporary *and* historical approaches to gender and religion in my reconstruction of Hopkins' life, drawing upon a wide range of hitherto unexamined archival and primary source materials and subjecting them to religious, feminist and cultural-historical analyses. It is somehow symbolic given the dominance of moral reform over every other aspect of her life, that no autobiography, diaries or personal documents are in existence. Apart from Rosa M. Barrett's *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir* (1907) and a few scattered letters in the papers of Archbishops Tait and Benson, Hopkins is recoverable only through her writings on sexual immorality. Her literary output was extensive, comprising over seventy separate titles on moral issues published through various purity organisations.[8] In addition, she produced works of fiction and poetry, and contributed articles to well-known periodicals such as the *Contemporary Review,* although her more creative writing talents were largely abandoned in the pursuit of her philanthropic endeavours.

Frank Mort's relatively sympathetic account of Hopkins' "new-style purity feminism", describes "the class and gender contradictions that bedevilled women's participation in the purity campaigns of the 1880s".[9] This thesis will argue that such contradictions can only be appreciated by an analysis of the graphic tensions present within late nineteenth-century religious feminism, as exemplified in Hopkins' own career. Use of the concepts "religion" and "feminism" require qualification here. The term "feminist" is in many ways an anachronism, as it did not gain common currency until the late 1890s. Hopkins herself never used the word, but spoke instead of "womanhood" or "the women's movement". I base my historical application of the term "feminism" on some interpretive criteria suggested by Karen Offen, and for the purposes of this thesis the concept will denote recognition of:

> the validity of women's own interpretations of their lived experience and...the values women claim publicly as their own...in assessing their status in society relative to men;....consciousness of, discomfort at, or even anger over institutionalized injustice...toward women as a group by men as a group...[and] elimination of that injustice by challenging, through efforts to alter prevailing ideas and/or social institutions and practices, the coercive...authority that upholds male prerogatives.[10]

As Ursula King has argued, the concept of "religion" is necessarily polysemic when discussed in relation to gender issues.[11] Throughout this thesis I will qualify my use of the term "religion" wherever necessary. Generally speaking, however, I understand "religion" to mean both the varying historical and cultural forms of institutional structures of faith and a personal experience of the sacred, but most prominently, a formative social and intellectual ideology.

Certain influences have been paramount in the writing of this thesis. All historians of gender and culture owe a debt to the seminal hypotheses advanced by Michel Foucault in *The History of Sexuality. Volume 1: An Introduction* (1976). In seeking to comprehend the interaction between religion, gender and sexual discourse, Foucault's historicization of the politics of sexuality has informed my research throughout, particularly his assertion that sexual identities have no reality outside of language and thus, "the history of sexuality is the history of what certain discourses have said about sex".[12] In his repudiation of the "repression hypothesis" posited by previous commentators, Foucault argued that rather than constraining or repressing sexual debate, the Victorian period witnessed a "veritable explosion"[13] in the production and dispersal of discourses concerned to articulate the cultural meaning and symbolism of sexual identity. Remedying his original omission of specific gender perspectives, feminist scholars have demonstrated incontrovertibly that ideologies of sexual difference provided a primary orientation in this discursive struggle. My work is clearly indebted to the feminist historical approach, but I extend the complexity of this theoretical paradigm, highlighting

the authoritative influence of the religious contribution to sexual discourse. Using the example of social purity I will contend, contrary to common historical consensus, that late-Victorian religious discourses on sex were *not* eclipsed by the rise of medical-scientific categories, but remained a major site for the definition and classification of sexuality into the following century.

John Fout has argued with regard to social purity that what were outwardly campaigns against vice and obscenity in reality reflected growing ecclesiastical concern over eroding boundaries of gender and sexual identity.[14] Envisioning a divinely ordained moral order which enshrined the heterosexual family model, purity reformers reasserted religious authority over marital and familial values against the onslaught of secular, progressive critiques. Within this conventional framework of gender relations was considerable room for subversion. Purity feminists like Hopkins appropriated dominant Victorian ideologies of women as the moral and spiritual superiors of men, creating a language of collective moral outrage which sanctioned their right to enter public debates on sexuality and sustained a powerful critique of male sexual abuse. The Foucauldian conceptualization of power as an omnipresent and decentralized force is significant for the appreciation of these religious women, with access to varying levels of authority, as agents in the making of their own history.[15] Frequently excluded from ecclesiastical debates on sexual issues, female purity workers spoke from the sidelines of institutional power, engaging in "reverse discourses" or discourses of resistance.[16] Drawing upon the languages available to them, they appropriated and subverted traditional, hierarchical categories of Christian thought, reconceived patriarchal concepts of female and male sexuality, and forged a highly successful coalition between religious expectations of male self-restraint and feminist demands for the elimination of the sexual double standard.

The study of religion and gender history is fundamentally interdisciplinary. The negative aspect of the field's "boundary existence" in relation to the mainstream disciplines of

history, religious studies and women's studies is the relative ease with which marginalization can occur. Nevertheless, there are benefits attached to the heterogeneous composition of religion and gender history with scholars able to draw upon a diversity of promising themes and concepts. In order to facilitate further development, a coherent theoretical framework is now essential. In Chapter 1 therefore, I conduct a series of preliminary investigations into the significance of history to contemporary religion and gender scholarship and conversely, the role of gender in studies of nineteenth-century religion. These discussions are not intended to be exhaustive, aiming only to alert the reader to the basic parameters and scope of potential enquiry. A detailed survey of texts in British women's history illustrates the approaches and topics undertaken to date, and I conclude this chapter with a critical exploration of available theoretical models.

Just as ecclesiastical historians have shown little interest in the experiences of women, so secular women historians have been reluctant to explore religious belief as a serious analytical variable. Indeed, in both historical and contemporary contexts, religious feminism has been regarded as the "stepsister" of the central feminist agenda.[17] Gail Malmgreen's observation that "religion has so far been a somewhat neglected element in the women's history revival"[18] provides the rationale for Chapter 2. I show that the ramifications of this breach are particularly significant when reconstructing an authentic depiction of Victorian womanhood and argue that it is indefensible to attempt a retrieval of nineteenth-century culture without acknowledging the ideological and social import of religion. My historiography of the status of religion in secular women's history, the first to be conducted on the British scene, is premised upon the conviction that religious history and women's history have much to offer each other in terms of content and theory. The ongoing debate surrounding nineteenth-century feminist sexual politics is examined and the contribution of my thesis to this dialogue outlined. Chapter 3 provides the first sustained treatment of Hopkins' personality and social background since Rosa Barrett's biography of 1907, including an assessment of her major emotional, theological

and intellectual influences. The historical origins of the social purity movement and the varied response of the different denominations to moral reform are examined in Chapter 4. The female subculture of social purity is also analysed in terms of its class-based and denominational composition. Hopkins' construction of gender identities is explored in Chapters 5 and 6. Her interpretation of female sexuality is assessed in conjunction with her work amongst prostitutes and her desire to eradicate dominant dualistic definitions of womanhood which she regarded as responsible for the perpetuation of a sexual double standard. Hopkins' tracts on male purity form the subject of Chapter 6. Her desire to speak out frankly on abusive male sexual behaviour and place this discourse firmly within an ecclesiastical context was revolutionary indeed. I will argue that her resulting interpretation of Christian manliness requires a serious revision of theories which posit the overwhelming secularization of late-Victorian masculinity. In Chapter 7 I look at Hopkins' response and that of the churches' generally, to the lively, public debates surrounding marriage and divorce in the 1880s and 1890s. I contend that the traditional sacramental model of marriage proffered by the church was open to a radical feminist re-appropriation which sought to protect women from the damaging financial and emotional implications of freer unions, and to promote a nascent discourse of female sexual pleasure. Finally, Chapter 8 explores the interaction between sexual identity and religious symbolism and assesses to what extent increasingly feminine representations of the divine were reflective of current concerns over gender. Hopkins' appropriation of female-associated qualities of divine suffering and sorrow as positive religious symbols for women will also be analysed. In the conclusion, I draw together the major themes of the thesis and suggest directions for future research.

Part One

HISTORICIZING RELIGION AND GENDER: METHODOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

CHAPTER 1:

REDRESSING THE BALANCE, TRANSFORMING THE ART: NEW THEORETICAL APPROACHES IN RELIGION AND GENDER HISTORY

1.1 RELIGION, GENDER AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HISTORY.

The past thirty years have witnessed a revolution in the methodological orientation of the study of religion. The growth of feminist consciousness and the corresponding emergence of gender as a primary analytical category has constituted a remarkable paradigm shift in research agendas, challenging the sufficiency of claims to intellectual objectivity and transforming existing interpretative models.[1] Fundamental to the epistemological challenge posed by feminist scholarship has been a thoroughgoing critique of the androcentric formulation of religious beliefs and practices, most significantly the persistent conflation of the norms of masculinity and humanity which has hitherto all but obliterated the creative contribution of women's religious experiences and insights.[2]

Whilst gender analysis has made far-reaching incursions into religious language, symbolism, biblical hermeneutics, ethics and theology, historical perspectives upon women and religion have struggled to gain a purposeful foothold.[3] Outside of research into specific groups such as biblical women or medieval female mystics, a definite lack of historical predisposition amongst scholars of religion and gender has been evident.[4] As Gail Malmgreen has noted, "some contemporary feminists have spoken and written as if the tradition of women's sacred wisdom is a direct legacy from ancient (even prehistoric) times to the present - with little of consequence happening in between".[5] Yet the methodology and rationale of history, which provides substance, texture and depth to our knowledge of the past and of ourselves in relation to that past, offers a primary impetus for the recovery of female visibility and thus a new, more adequate version of

the historical narrative. In documenting masculine privilege and the systematic omission of women from the official records of religion, history unveils the distorted paradigm of gender relations which has dominated our epistemological mindset for so long, calling the adequacy of resulting explanations of the social order into question.

In 1979, Eleanor McLaughlin explained the "deeply antihistorical bias" of many religious feminists as an understandable indictment of the "depressing litany of theological justifications" for ecclesiastical misogyny throughout the centuries. By way of a solution to this intellectual impasse, and in order to explore the resistance of women to such negative traditions, McLaughlin proffered a revisionist approach to the Christian past that was simultaneously responsible - "grounded in the historicist rubric of dealing with the past on it own terms"[6] and usable - interpreted through the prism of present concerns.

The recovery of a "usable past" has since become a truism amongst feminist scholars using history largely as a resource for contemporary women's spirituality. The desire to retrieve an appropriately empowering heritage is central to the work of Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza for example, whose study of New Testament women has greatly expanded our vision of nascent Christian communities.[7] African-American feminists have similarly drawn upon the unacknowledged repository of nineteenth-century black women's spiritual activism as a major element in their construction of a meaningful and transformative womanist theology, regarding the struggles of their foremothers as of inestimable value in the enlargement of contemporary female self-consciousness.[8] A profound connection between historical continuity and self-identity is also made by Ursula King in her seminal discussion of nineteenth-century women scholars of religion. Historical investigation "is not simply a matter of setting the record straight" she observes, "it is also an issue of... personal and corporate identity".[9] King's argument, that past achievements warrant greater recognition as a source of professional and spiritual appropriation for women scholars today is a valid one:

> Identity is constructed by using existing materials drawn from personal and collective historical experience; but...also constricted within the traditional boundaries given to history so far....concerned with the reversal or rearrangement of boundaries, and...the growth and maintenance of their own identities, [women scholars] need to relate not only to each other, but to the 'foremothers' in their fields of study.[10]

The recovery of women as active agents and makers of their own spiritual history rather than as passive recipents of an imposed patriarchal order can be vital in the affirmation of contemporary feminist intellectual and political strategies. But reading history solely as an inspirational resource is fraught with methodological difficulties. The tendency towards present-mindedness on the part of the non-historian frequently leads to what Sean Gill has termed "a teleological reading of history",[11] that is, the desire to scrutinize the past with a view to extracting those narratives deemed suitable for the contemporary purpose served by them. As Karen Offen has pointed out, when judging women primarily in terms of their contribution to the overall historical development of feminist consciousness the avoidance of slippage into anachronistic thinking is highly problematic.[12]

A primary interest of this thesis therefore, is to explore the creative tension between the twin poles of McLaughlin's historical dialectic, responsibility and usability, in the belief that "an over-simplistic translation of the language of the past into the interests of the present is a disservice to both".[13] Rather than ascribing inspirational status to all women of the past, challenging questions need to be asked concerning the historical dynamics of religion, gender and power. Women may never have been authoritative shapers of the religion/culture nexus, but in their formative appropriation of available social ideologies, both resistance and collusion, status-defying and status-preserving responses have emerged. In this vein, scholars of women and religion have cautioned against an "uncritical valorization"[14] of spiritual heroines and called instead for critical sensitivity

to the complex alliance of conservative and radical aspects of faith in the lives of female icons such as Julian of Norwich or Florence Nightingale.

If an insufficiently contextualised reading of any given period and its inherent ambiguities for women is one extreme of present-mindedness, then the other tendency has been to reject the validity of women's past lives as unfortunate reminders of the prevailing power of patriarchy and the inability or unwillingness of women to resist those norms. Caroline Walker Bynum's essays on medieval gender and sexuality in *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (1992), are particularly instructive here.[15] Her attention to the contextual richness of the female mystic tradition eschews easy identification with current feminist standpoints. Yet neither does she compromise the extent to which medieval women created radical new meanings and symbols for themselves from dominant spiritual traditions. Modern scholars she argues, have tended to interpret the extreme asceticism of these women in terms of a negative internalization of dominant cultural values. Thus the practice of fasting for example, becomes somehow redolent of medieval society's denigration of the female.[16] Conversely, Bynum's reading illustrates the way in which female mystics were able to re-cast what may now be perceived as highly ambiguous religious metaphors for women such as suffering and self-sacrifice, into symbols of real empowerment and purposefulness. Her prioritizing of historical specificity is the very antithesis of present-mindedness. She allows the female mystical tradition to emerge in all its unfamiliarity and dissimilarity from present feminist considerations, contending that we cannot plunder religious symbols of the past without acknowledging the importance of the spiritual milieu in which they were articulated.

As well as reviewing the vitality of particular religious symbols, Bynum's work compels the realization that women of the past must be allowed to emerge as historical actors in their own right with their own concerns. These concerns may not be ours and may even conflict with current feminist interests and analyses, but they are no less significant for

that. "We do hear female voices speaking from the past" but in the diagnosis of our own oppression, we must recognise that "women in every age speak in a variety of accents".[17] Cautioning against contemporary judgments, Bynum concludes that the richness and sheer exuberance of women's religious involvement in their discrete historical cultures ultimately judges us.

There is of course, an extent to which the history of women and religion will only earn its place in the wider field of religion and gender scholarship by demonstrating the contemporary relevance of its work. The balance to be struck lies between the poles of responsibility and usability, for it is the business of the historian to understand the past both on its own terms and through the prism of the present, producing insights of relevance through responsible historical scholarship. If the history of women and religion is to be constructed as fully as sources will allow, which this thesis contends it must in order to allow the field to develop its own methodological terms of reference, then *all* aspects of female religious experience must be explored. As the following chapters demonstrate, even such recent history as the late nineteenth-century manifests a perplexing array of contradictory allegiances by devout women. Conservative traditionalism and radical feminism alike form part of the religion and gender heritage. It is not solely documentation of adherence to proto-feminist ideologies that constitutes the rationale of historians of women and religion, but the retrieval of all women of faith who negotiated complex self-identities for themselves through the multiple alliances of spirituality, politics and gender.

1.2 RE-VISIONING VICTORIAN RELIGION: THE RELEVANCE OF GENDER.

Having ascertained history as germane to contemporary religion and gender scholarship, the following section offers a preliminary appraisal of the pertinence of gender as a theoretical category for religious history. Studies in Victorian religion have been largely

concerned with issues of doctrinal purity or denominational maturation. Theological controversies as witnessed by the impact of the Oxford Movement or the advent of higher biblical criticism have received sustained attention, along with intellectual developments such as secularization, Darwinism and the conflict between theology and science.[18] Denominational expansion and diminution, particularly in relation to Evangelicalism and Nonconformity, and the social interaction between the churches and Britain's newly emergent industrial communities have also been subject to extensive research.[19] Traditional accounts of church history have incorporated little, if any gender analysis in their examination of the politics and policies of ecclesiastical government. The conventional focus upon institutional hierarchies, bishops and synods has as Gill has pointed out, completely overlooked the fact "that while the leadership of the Church was overwhelmingly male, the rank and file in the pews was mainly female".[20]

More recently, social historians of religion moving away from this preoccupation with the clergy have looked instead at various manifestations of popular piety, asking to what extent ecclesiastical doctrines and rarified theological concepts received practical application amongst lay-folk in a given social context.[21] Despite a promising methodological rationale to recover the spiritual beliefs and practices of ordinary people, the new social history of religion has also failed to redress the gender imbalance in any meaningful fashion, focusing primarily upon economic stratification and the process of class formation.[22] Yet the intersection of the variables of class and gender is of considerable relevance to nineteenth-century religion. As Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall's seminal *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle-Class, 1790-1850* (1987) demonstrates, gender identities were central to the class consciousness of the respectable early-Victorian family. To the extent that social history has developed our comprehension of the interrelatedness between religion and social organization, the history of gender is its direct descendant, giving greater recognition to the way in which relations between and within the sexes contributed to the structure of society. Gender, defined as the culturally constructed meanings attributed to sexual

difference, is a basic component of human social relations. As such, all gender history is in some sense social history.[23] My thesis contends that what Patricia Crawford has described as the "sexual politics of religion"[24] is crucial to a fuller understanding of Victorian religious culture and the power relations operating throughout nineteenth-century society generally. But what *is* the conceptual and methodological significance of gender for religious history and conversely, how might the study of religion illuminate our understanding of gender? The ensuing discussion offers some initial answers to this question.

An obvious and pressing reason for the consideration of gender in Victorian religion is that women of all classes constituted the vast majority of church and chapel congregations. The numerical "feminization of religion" remains an uncontested feature of nineteenth-century devotion, although we cannot speak confidently yet about the precise extent to which this occurred, nor can an identical set of contributory factors be assumed for each denomination.[25] A useful start to this enquiry has been made, however. J. S. Reed's "'A Female Movement': The Feminization of Anglo-Catholicism" (1988) has quantified the over-representation of women in ritualist churches, offering theological and cultural-historical explanations of its occurrence. In terms of working-class attendance, Hugh McLeod has suggested that gender, "a crucial dividing line",[26] is most profitably analysed with reference to distinctive regional or employment patterns. Women's concomitant increase in influence within the churches calls attention to the significance of their role in the perpetuation of denominational beliefs and practices, and raises questions concerning the power relations between churchwomen and clergymen. Clerical dependence upon female labours in the realms of philanthropy, religious education and missionary work, as well as continued exclusion of women from access to institutional leadership, prompted contestations of authority that are most adequately assessed through the framework of gender.[27]

Another aspect of the feminization process identified by historians was the steady

alteration of liturgy, doctrine and symbolism throughout the period to accommodate the tastes of the female majority. As Barbara Pope has suggested, the courtship of Christian women was a strategic response by a clerical hierarchy concerned to withstand the fierce onslaught of secularization, and quick to realise that their future lay "at mother's knee".[28] The Anglo-Catholic reinstatement of sisterhoods and the practice of auricular confession are regarded by Reed as directly related to the predominance of women within High Church congregations, and devotion to the Virgin Mary continued to exert a powerful, albeit contradictory influence upon nineteenth-century constructions of femininity and motherhood. Was there in Britain, as scholars have argued of Europe and America, a gradual "softening" of harsh dogma and the elevation of "feminine" principles of meekness, humility and forgiveness in theological reflection - and to what extent could this be understood as an act of female initiative and agency rather than an ecclesiastical imposition from "above"? [29]

Scholars have rightly cautioned against applying this formula in such a way that complex theological negotiations of gender are oversimplified and misrepresented.[30] As Chapter 6 will show, the feminization of religion was countermanded by clergymen equally concerned to propound a robust, muscular Christianity that might entice men back into the churches. Either way, asserting the impact of the gender composition of worshipping communities upon Victorian doctrinal and theological development presupposes a causal relationship between structures of belief and the existing gender order.[31] Contemporary feminist scholarship has convincingly demonstrated that our imaging of the divine has never been free from assumptions about gender, and has as much to say about our socio-sexual relations as about God.[32] The Victorian debate over the nature of Christ was no less influenced by current constructions of masculinity and femininity. My research on Hopkins illustrates just one example of a feminized Christology, but how extensive a phenomenon was this? Are there links to be made here with the numerous instances of female messianic doctrines that proliferated on the edges of mainstream religion? Most importantly, have we hitherto underestimated the

theological and spiritual creativity of devout Victorian women?[33]

Through the dissemination of sermons, educational tracts, hymns, devotional poetry and prescriptive literature, institutional forms of religion applied unparalleled influence in defining the ideological parameters of femininity and masculinity throughout the nineteenth-century. From William Wilberforce's *A Practical View of the Prevailing System of Professed Christians* (1797) to J. W. Burgon's *Woman's Place: A Sermon* (1871), much theological muscle was exerted in delineating cultural modes of behaviour appropriate to either sex.[34] Most of this literature conveyed a powerful ideology of domesticity. As the economic and political base of ecclesiastical power progressively declined, hearth and home acquired an authoritative religious symbolism of its own. The domestication of Victorian religion, a process examined more closely in Chapter 2, meant that the churches' main influence was in precisely those realms most heavily impinged upon by notions of gender. Ecclesiastical historians have need therefore, to understand the sexual politics of nineteenth-century religion and the way in which gender dynamics operating within the family unit connected with the exercise of male power in the wider political system. In this way, a wide range of unexplored research issues may be introduced providing a salient historical perspective upon important contemporary debates, notably the response of the churches to the shifting dimensions of morality, sex, marriage and the family.[35]

Gender addresses men and masculinity as well as women and femininity. Whereas androcentric methodology has disguised the constructed nature of masculinity by defining it as normative, gender research reveals that men are equally conditioned by their relationships with women and other males.[36] The primary focus of conventional ecclesiastical history has been that of male elites, male institutions and the exercise of public power. As John Tosh and Michael Roper have argued, gender studies facilitates an advantageous connection with this traditional area of enquiry by demonstrating that "men's power in history has resided in their masculinity as well as their material privilege

and their manipulation of law and custom".[37] Religious history can benefit from a gendered approach by seeking to comprehend how clergymen viewed their actions in terms of contributing to their self-understanding and status as men, and how this defined them as separate from, and seemingly superior to women.

The exploration of masculinity is in itself the continuation of a dominant nineteenth-century genre in which commentators such as Thomas Carlyle, Thomas Arnold and Thomas Hughes looked variously at manly codes of chivalry, purity, bravery and athleticism. The seminal scholarship of David Newsome and Norman Vance, followed more recently by the work of John Tosh and James Mangan, has already begun to establish a lively, critical exposition of masculinity and its relation to the all-male hierarchies of churchmanship, education and militarism.[38] Tosh's interpretation of the family of Edward White Benson exemplifies a fully integrated sexual politics of religion, studying the domestic world as well as the public career of the Archbishop of Canterbury.[39]

As my brief explorations of the feminization of religion, Christology and ideologies of gender and masculinity have intimated, a study of gender can illuminate the discipline of ecclesiastical history in a variety of ways. Restoring women to the past means reshaping the landscape of religious history and the distorted, male-specific nature of work so far in order to depict a narrative that accommodates even-handedly the experiences of both sexes. A fully integrated model of gender may deepen understanding of existing accounts, introduce new concerns or in some cases compel serious re-examination of assumed categories and explanations.[40] It should certainly prohibit church historians from arguing that despite knowledge of the female presence, their interpretation of Victorian religion remains unchanged. In *The Unacceptable Face: The Modern Church in the Eyes of the Historian* (1987), John Kent has argued that an authentic history of the Christian faith must confront the fatal blow dealt by the women's movement to traditional symbolism and theology. As the "most serious critical opposition to

Christianity"[41] in the modern world, feminism must become a "salient point" in religious history. At a time when "the treatment of Victorian church history as a whole needs a new perspective"[42] it is principally the study of gender and feminism according to Kent, that will provide the necessary resources for the revivification of the field.

1.3 CURRENT PERSPECTIVES IN BRITISH WOMEN'S RELIGIOUS HISTORY.

In 1986, Gail Malmgreen described the current state of knowledge in the history of women and religion as "very uneven".[43] Even American scholarship she argued, well in advance of its British counterpart in the provision of key texts and reference guides to facilitate further research, exhibited a selective denominational focus. "Quaker and Methodist women...[were] relatively well served", but "the historiography of Roman Catholic laywomen...[was] all but non-existent".[44] The last ten years have seen the acute paucity of sources on the British scene somewhat remedied with the publication of several important studies. Despite evidence of a burgeoning interest, however, the field remains grossly under-researched.

The following discussion traces the recent historiography of nineteenth-century women and religion from the 1960s to the present.[45] Deciding which texts qualified specifically as women's religious history was problematic due to overlapping material. Finally, when compiling the survey for analysis, only those works which took religion and gender as their *explicit* focus were included, necessarily excluding social and religious histories which made mention of female piety. References to religion by secular women historians are also omitted from this survey as this forms the basis of an ensuing examination in Chapter 2. A review of published texts in the history of nineteenth-century women and religion indicates a little over forty separate titles produced during the last thirty five years. Almost half of these take the form of single chapters or journal articles. Three edited collections of material include Dale Johnson's *Women in English*

Religion 1700-1925 (1983), a documentary history which provides a selection of primary sources and related issues for debate; *Women in the Church* (1990), edited by W. J. Sheils and D. Wood, a valuable overview of women's contribution to religious life, but whose vast chronological remit yielded only two nineteenth-century British studies, and finally Gail Malmgreen (ed.) *Religion in the Lives of English Women 1760-1930* (1986), a useful anthology which is still a primary point of reference for scholars in the field. The remainder of the sample can be broadly categorized in terms of a denominational or thematic focus.

1.3.i Women in the Church of England.

Viewed denominationally, the current state of research is partial in the extreme. As one might expect, Anglicanism has proved the fortunate recipient of the majority of output, beginning with Sister Joanna's descriptive study of "The Deaconness Community of St. Andrews" in 1961. Constituting virtually half of the sample, the comprehensive coverage of Anglican women is signalled by two formative texts published during the last decade - Brian Heeney's *The Women's Movement in the Church of England 1850-1930* (1988), and the more recent *Women and the Church of England from the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (1994) by Sean Gill. Heeney delineates the growth of an assertive Anglican feminism set against a social context in which women were an increasingly advancing presence in public life. In a detailed account of various aspects of women's work from voluntary philanthropic endeavour to the political activism of the Church League for Women's Suffrage, he reveals the anomalous circumstances of female subordination in which ecclesiastical reinforcement of women's inferiority was juxtaposed with an unprecedented female involvement in church affairs. Heeney's extensive use of primary sources depicts the Anglican hierarchy as an unequivocal bulwark of anti-feminist polemic. Essays such as Bishop Christopher Wordsworth's *Christian Womanhood and Christian Sovereignty* (1884) which declared woman as "after man, out of man and for man"[46] are noted in unflinching detail. At variance with official doctrines of female frailty are narratives of women churchworkers such as Ellen

Ranyard's Biblewomen's movement, the Church Army Mission sisters and, progeny of the Oxford Movement, the flourishing revival of the female religious life. The book also contains some fascinating glimpses into the machinations of ecclesiastical bureaucracy and the hard-won concessions for women in the move towards equality of status.

Sean Gill's broader-based investigation displays a similar awareness of the power issues at stake in the conflict over expanding female roles within the church. In a nuanced interpretation of the contradictions at play in Anglican ideologies of femininity, he contends that it was perfectly possible for churchwomen to subvert orthodox notions of womanhood and sanction involvement in a range of public campaigns such as education, moral reform, missionary activity and temperance work. His interdisciplinary methodology which draws upon contemporary feminist, cultural, and sociological theory makes for a persuasive portrayal of the socially constructed nature of Anglican theologies of gender and the fundamental significance of their contestation to the doctrinal and administrative development of the Church of England over the last three centuries.

1.3.ii Women in Catholicism.

With only a single reference located for women Quakers and Jewish women respectively, the remaining scholarship on Victorian women and religion is divided reasonably equitably between Methodism, Roman Catholicism and the Salvation Army.[47] In terms of cited publications, Catholic women appeared surprisingly well represented, exceeding the number of individual studies on either Methodist or Salvationist women.[48] The larger proportion of books as opposed to articles on Methodist women, however, indicated a more extensive analysis of this tradition to date.

Apart from Elizabeth Usherwood's *Women First: Biographies of Catholic Women in the Forefront of Change* (1989), which is not restricted to the Victorian period, the scholarship on Catholic women comes from two main sources. A flourishing Irish women's history, prompting keen interest in nineteenth-century Catholic nuns accounts

for nearly half the literary output. Work on English Catholic conventual life has been solely undertaken by the groundbreaking research of Susan O'Brien. In her article "Terra Incognita: The Nun in Nineteenth Century England" (1988), O'Brien attests to the rapid expansion of an active and public female apostolate readily absorbed into the educational, pastoral and reform work of a newly restored Catholic church. Both quantitatively and qualitatively, the period was one of "vital innovation in the religious life for women" who contributed "an essential service within the life and mission of the Catholic church".[49] The overwhelming Protestant focus on Victorian religious culture so far, however, has meant that the literature "has barely acknowledged their presence".[50] O'Brien's research not only establishes new denominational horizons within women's religious history, it is particularly instructive in its attention to the historiography of women religious, suggesting several new lines of approach. Given the working-class status of many of the sisters, the need to assess the revival of religious life in terms of both gender and class is posited. What were the internal hierarchies of the communities themselves she asks, and how effective were the convents as vehicles for the "self-improvement and social mobility of Catholic working-class girls"?[51] What impact, if any, did class have upon the vocational calling of these women?

1.3.iii Women in the Methodist Tradition.

Class analysis is also central to historians of Methodist women in their consideration of sectarian Methodism and its impact upon the world of popular piety.[52] The early decades of the nineteenth-century saw the institutionalization of Wesleyan Methodism and a corresponding official disapproval of women preachers. By the 1820s, the feminist initiative had passed to the Primitive Methodists. Yet, as Colin Dews' essay on "Ann Carr and the Female Revivalists of Leeds" (1986) illustrates, antagonisms were still provoked by female preaching even amongst this non-hierarchical denomination.[53] The charismatic Carr seceded from the Primitives to form a separate, female-dominated sect known as the Leeds Female Revivalists. This was a short-lived, but nonetheless remarkable episode of women's religious history, in which Carr proselytized

successfully in a notoriously poor district of Leeds and established a chapel-cum-community relief centre before her death in 1841. Given the lack of success by Wesleyan and Primitive Methodists in the area notes Dews, the efforts of these female revivalists were all the more outstanding.

Deborah Valenze's *Prophetic Sons and Daughters: Female Preaching and Popular Religion in Industrial England* (1985) also comments on the prominent success rate of female leadership within working-class sectarian Methodism. According to Valenze, as a result of early nineteenth-century industrialization upon the cottage industries of the north, popular forms of evangelicalism were crystallized as a major conduit for local rebellion. Itinerant women preachers ministering to poverty-stricken mixed audiences across the region personified this reactionary spirit. In their promotion of a domesticated, family-based spirituality, they functioned as harbingers of traditional religious and cultural values in the face of rapid, disconcerting change. Bearers of community class attitudes, female preachers challenged the values of capitalism and exerted a persuasive force upon their congregations.

1.3.iv Women in the Salvation Army.

Historical representations of Salvation Army women incorporate a wide range of approaches, exploring the internal dynamics of the Army itself as well as its social influence. Once again, female preachers feature prominently. The doughty figure of Catherine Booth dominates the accounts. Her mid-century advocacy of the training of thousands of working-class women into the ranks of ordained Army clergy is celebrated by N. H. Murdoch as the cutting edge of equal access into Victorian ministry. Army women were, in theory at least, able to lead services alongside and attain similar rank to their male peers.[54] Ann Higginbotham's article on the Army's rescue work with unmarried mothers also testifies to advanced methods and attitudes.[55] She describes the Army's Women's Social Services as "one of the largest, most effective, and...most innovative rescue organisations in Great Britain",[56] a venture that managed a realistic

balance between "practical assistance and attempted moral reform".[57]

The Salvation Army is also the subject of Pamela Walker's innovative focus on men and masculinity, documenting the antagonism and ridicule endured by Salvationist men in their rejection, upon conversion, of the pugilist elements of working-class manhood.[58] Given that the Army was "neither a simple nor an obvious choice for a working-class man",[59] Christian belief offered an enhanced sense of self-worth that compensated for economic and political disfranchisement. Despite accusations of effeminacy she argues, these men were empowered through their faith to embrace a new form of maleness.

1.3.v Women and spiritual heterodoxy.

Several works in the sample deal with more radical forms of religious belief including theosophy and millenarianism. The growing interest in this area amongst cultural historians has meant that certain titles in the survey have functioned as a major resource for broader projects. Social historian Barbara Taylor for example, draws heavily upon J. K. Hopkins' biography of the millenarian sect leader Joanna Southcott in her *Eve and the New Jerusalem: Socialism and Feminism in the Nineteenth Century* (1983).[60] Taylor cites Southcott as a pre-eminent example of the "doctrine of the female messiah"[61]. The concept of woman as exalted intermediary of divine power also figures strongly in recent works on late nineteenth-century female spiritualism. Texts such as Alex Owen's *The Darkened Room: Women, Power and Spiritualism in Late Victorian England* (1989) have not been included in the sample because of a primary focus on the array of power strategies used by Victorian women, as opposed to a study of their faith. Yet titles like these signal the enormous research potential of heterodox forms of Christianity, a debate to which historians of religion and gender could surely contribute to in a distinctive and profitable manner.[62]

1.3.vi Female religious communities.

Two major themes have dominated women's religious history so far - the struggle for

the right to preach, and female religious communities. The latter is quantitatively better represented with twelve separate titles dealing specifically with the religious life for women. O'Brien's work on Catholic nuns has already been referred to, but studies of Anglican congregations also exist. A. Deacon and M. Hill's article on "The Problem of 'Surplus Women' in the Nineteenth Century" (1972) for example, presented deaconness houses and sisterhoods as part of a nineteenth-century four-point schema of conservative/radical and secular/religious dichotomies attempting to solve the mid-century demographic gender imbalance.

Biographies figure prominently in this category. The anonymous life history of Mother Emily Ayckbowm, founder of the community of the Sisters of the Church, was published in 1964.[63] The following year saw the first of two works devoted to Priscilla Lydia Sellon, Mother Superior of the Society of the Most Holy Trinity, established in 1848. T. J. Williams' descriptive account provides little theoretical interpretation, presenting a rather hagiographical portrait of Sellon as the self-sacrificing restorer of female sisterhoods in the Church of England.[64] Almost thirty years later Gill, building upon Williams' narrative, placed the life and work of Sellon in a historiographical overview of Anglican religious communities, forefronting the dymanics of gender and power. The social vision of the sisterhoods was appraised as an essentially conservative one with no real agenda for social change. "Nothing in the Anglo-Catholic support of sisterhoods was intended to challenge the prevailing belief in the complementary but different qualities of men and women, and the corresponding division of social roles which this entailed".[65] As with O'Brien's assessment, class difference is depicted as a central feature, not only in terms of the internal hierarchical structure of the convent, but also as a social device to protect the sisters against the immorality of those to whom they ministered. According to Gill, Sellon was the epitome of benevolent maternalism, a woman "who succeeded in exercising power more by manipulating than by deferring to Victorian theological and social prescriptions for correct female behaviour".[66]

1.3.vii Women and the priesthood.

Female ministry has remained a constant and recurring theme throughout the history of women and religion. It has been subject to a variety of treatments - biographical, as in Sheila Fletcher's *Maude Royden: A Life* (1989); sociological, as in Olive Anderson's seminal essay on "Women Preachers in Mid-Victorian Britain" (1969); and denominational, including the previously mentioned works by Dews and Valenze. Anderson's essay offers an interesting contrast to the work of Heeney in the relationship ascribed between female ministerial leadership, laicization, and the secular women's movement. Focusing on the second evangelical revival of the 1860s, she analyses the expansion of respectable middle-class female preachers in terms of the American millenialist influence of Phoebe Palmer's "Holiness" movement which endowed the ministry of women with "unique eschatological significance".[67] Heeney situates the call for female ministry amongst a general ethos of reform in Anglican "patronage, discipline and finance".[68] Both writers regard the shift towards lay participation as a major, enabling feature of women's demands for a greater stake in active ministry, but as manifested in differing ways. For Anderson, female revivalist preaching formed part of a thoroughgoing mid-century laicization that represented a spontaneous and "genuinely new departure in popular religious attitudes and practices".[69] The increased lay co-operation in Anglicanism's efforts towards self-government was more of a long-term catalyst than an immediate framework of support to women's ministry according to Heeney, with exclusion from the lay-based membership of the parish church councils and the Representative church council prompting an angry backlash from Anglican churchwomen.[70]

Religion and feminism were regarded as mutually exclusive entities by Anderson, with little apparent connection between female preaching and the secular emancipation of women. Drawing a sharp contrast between spiritual and social equality, she argued that although a "great change certainly took place in the actual role of women in the religious sphere...although this was widely accepted by religious circles, it was rationalized and

defended in terms which preserved all the essentials of the anti-feminist position".[71] By comparison, Heeney linked the call for increased participation of women in church government directly to the emergence of an Anglican church feminism and the increased activities of churchwomen in the cause of suffrage. Louise Creighton's speech at the 1899 Church Congress made it abundantly clear that "the failure of the Church leaders to sympathise with the women's movement"[72] was fast losing them the support and effort of a talented cadre of women.

In conclusion, an interesting feature of the sample is yielded by the subject representation of various denominations. Studies of Anglican women range from sisterhoods to the Mothers' Union, and from ordination to temperance reform. Work on Methodist women, however, has without exception been considered through the medium of the preaching ministry and Catholic historiography is almost exclusively a consideration of women's orders and the conventual life. This observation implies no criticism of existing work, but suggests the need for greater cross-fertilization of themes and ideas wherever possible.

1.3.viii Sources in British women's religious history.

The wide-ranging agenda of research possibilities indicated above must be offset against considerations of the practical difficulties confronting the historian of religion and gender. These are invariably source-related, both in terms of the scarcity or inaccessibility of certain types of evidence and the inherent limitations of available material. The documentation of working-class women's religious experience is particularly problematic and, as demonstrated by O'Brien and Valenze requires a highly creative use of extant data.[73] Letters, diaries, autobiographies, memoirs, hymns, devotional writings, sermons, educational tracts and prescriptive literature constitute the bulk of potential primary sources. These documents are also subject to the exigencies of class, for they represent the history of a predominantly articulate and literate group of women.

Prescriptive literature, the majority of this study's source material, poses additional problems concerning the interrelation between ideology and social reality that will be dealt with later on in this chapter.

1.4 NEW METHODOLOGIES FOR A VICTORIAN SEXUAL POLITICS OF RELIGION.

Given the range of themes and approaches encompassed by the history of religion and gender, the need for methodological and conceptual clarification is vital. Only through a systematic theoretical framework which outlines its own distinctive academic terms of reference can the history of women or gender and religion avoid consignment to a minor disciplinary sub-category. There are many theoretical strategies by which to achieve this objective. In order to construct a coherent methodology, interpretative models need to be identified which raise questions concerning the use of key terms such as "feminism", "gender" or "patriarchy", and the way that these concepts have been expressed historically. So far, I have used the phrases "religion and gender" and "women and religion" interchangeably. Yet there are hugely complex debates around such terms with serious ramifications for the type of project undertaken, subjects of study and conclusions to be drawn. In the following discussions, some of the basic theoretical models available such as "women's history", "feminist history" and "gender history" will be explored, alongwith their possibilities and limitations for the study of religion.

1.4.i Women's history.

Women's history, which may be defined simply as historical work on women, seeks to retrieve, explore and interpret the lives and experiences of those multitudes of women hitherto hidden from history. As June Purvis has noted, the task of restoring women to visibility from previous male-dominated narratives has a long historical pedigree.[74] Originating with the recovery of "women worthies", a popular nineteenth-century literary genre, recent accounts have come a long way from the frequently hagiographical

celebration of great women. Extending social history's concern about the daily lives of ordinary people, historians of women have reconstructed the socio-economic, domestic and political dimensions of the Victorian female sphere with remarkable comprehensiveness, examining women with reference to their reproductive capacities, marriage choices, educational experiences, attitudes towards childbirth and role within the family economy.[75]

From the depiction of inspiring exemplars with their personification of desirable Christian qualities found in the earliest biographies of female saints and notable churchwomen, the "women's history" model has continued to provide a foundational approach for the exploration of women's religious beliefs and practices. Indeed, the majority of texts cited in the above survey of British women's religious history make use of this framework. In its emphasis upon the tools of straightforward historical retrieval - excavation of new data, empirical analysis and descriptive narrative - women's history has proved essential in the reconstruction of the role of religion in women's lives, including their status within and contributions to various communities of faith. And there is still much groundwork to be done. Studies of women in nineteenth-century Quakerism, Catholicism, Unitarianism, Baptism, Congregationalism and a myriad of smaller nonconformist sects have yet to be undertaken. As Malmgreen has noted, even basic quantitative analyses regarding patterns of gender representation in worship remain unclear.[76]

Women's history seeks to remedy basic historiographical areas of omission, producing new repositories of knowledge which prioritize female creativity, agency and initiative in the making of religious history. It has been prone, somewhat unfairly, to accusations of simply "filling in the gaps", of producing a supplementary, compensatory history which fits fresh subjects into received historical categories thereby falling short of the full radical theoretical potential of feminist and gender analysis.[77] Women's history, contends Joan Scott, illuminates women's experience but fails to challenge the task of how history is written. "As long as women's history has addressed itself to making women visible in

existing frameworks, it has contributed new information, but not a distinctive methodology".[78] Criticisms like this are misplaced when applied to such uncharted territory as British women's religious history. Not only is it important to relate new findings to established themes of historical enquiry in order to assess how results might bear upon an existing consensus, I believe the women's history paradigm contains considerable transformative scope for a revised perspective upon Victorian religion. First, in focusing upon the female sphere the dominance of male-defined histories that privilege public events and achievements is undercut and the study of the domestic realm acknowledged as an equally legitimate area of historical enquiry. In view of the aforementioned ideological location of nineteenth-century religion within the private, affective sphere, women's history can open up new investigative horizons surrounding domestic spirituality, daily devotions and structures of family religion generally. As Malmgreen has commented, "we have no idea yet how ...[these] might be correlated with social class, age, marital status, geography or educational background".[79] Secondly, charting the contributions of women to public religious activity may require serious re-evaluation as to the relevance of traditional periodizations of Victorian structures of faith. Gauging the expansion and contraction of female responsibility and access to power throughout the various churches may well provide an entirely different chronology of denominational development than that determined by male interests. Periods regarded as watersheds in ecclesiastical historical change are not necessarily the same for women as for men.[80]

1.4.ii Feminist history.

The terms "women's history" and "feminist history" are often used interchangeably, but despite areas of overlap they are by no means identical. Whereas women's history is defined by its subject matter, feminist history - "historical work infused by a concern about the past and present oppression of women"[81] - is designated by its mode of analysis. Women's history contributes partially to the feminist project in terms of its

revelation of previously neglected aspects of female activity, but does not evince an explicitly feminist perspective. It can also avoid the more difficult questions relating to the sexual dynamics of historical access to power.[82] Rather than viewing historical retrieval as a sufficent end in itself, feminist historians politicize female invisibility by asking who, or what structures and policies benefit from such invisibility. In seeking to discern trends of female oppression and their mode of accomplishment, feminist history is committed to the study of patriarchy, defined by Judith Bennett as:

> ...a familial-social, ideological, political system in which men...through ritual, tradition, law and language, customs, education, and the division of labour, determine what part women shall or shall not play, and in which the female is everywhere subsumed under the male.[83]

Use of the term "patriarchy" remains controversial, however. Debates as to its meaning and value continue to reverberate throughout feminist circles with many scholars objecting to the centrality of the concept as unnecessarily confrontational.[84] In focusing on female oppression, it is argued, theoreticians of patriarchy project women solely as victims, denying them any vestige of historical agency. The unequivocal assertion of the guilt of all men and virtue of all women is a practice which, according to Bridget Hill, serves only to alienate our male allies.[85] Appropriated as an all-purpose, convenient shorthand for the diverse dynamics of the reality of female subordination, patriarchy has emerged as something of a transhistorical, monolithic spectre for feminists. Because the churches have formed such key sites of male-exclusive and anti-female sensibilities, however, patriarchy is still a highly pertinent category in the study of religious history. Ecclesiastical patriarchy has been responsible for the creation of a thriving network of male-serving rituals, language and doctrines, of which women's denied access to ordination is perhaps most symbolic, historically speaking. Nevertheless, there is a pressing need for more careful application of the term. Rather than substituting alternatives such as "male dominance" or "male supremacy" that fail to connote the structural, systemic nature of women's oppression, sustained and precise examination of

the multiple, changing expressions of patriarchy is required.[86]

Reconstructing the ways in which religious forms of patriarchy have survived throughout the centuries by isolating the differing mechanisms of clerical adaptation to specific gender-political crises is of real importance in the development of religion and gender history. Recent feminist research has concentrated on women's simultaneous resistance, negotiation and mediation of patriarchy at any given historical moment. Whilst faced with considerable ideological and institutional barriers to equality of representation with men, women were never merely passive victims of patriarchy but often crucial to its perpetuation. Judith Bennett's observation that women both "colluded in, undermined and survived patriarchy"[87] is of central significance to the methodology of my thesis. Only a fully contextualized definition of patriarchy will enable feminist scholarship to avoid accusations of propagandism and anachronism. Likewise, the thorough historicization of patriarchy will facilitate a more adequate understanding of the complexities of how women both benefitted from and suffered under its regime.

1.4.iii Gender history I.

As noted earlier, the significance of gender to religious history is premised upon the notion that the identities or roles assigned to women and men in society are "historical facts, that require historical analyses".[88] The shift to a paradigm of gender with its incorporation of male as well as female experience is a methodological insight of huge import to history, religious studies and of course, women's studies. In a profile of the new emphasis on gender in the contemporary study of women and religion, Ursula King has observed that "the strength of a critical, but more inclusive gender studies lies in its greater comprehensiveness through seeing femaleness and maleness, and the attendant constructions of femininity and masculinity, as closely interrelated".[89] A similar intellectual rationale for gender is given by historian Michelle Rosaldo, who has argued that understanding women purely in terms of separateness prevents any appreciation of "how men and women both participate in and help to reproduce the institutional forms

that may oppress, liberate, join or divide them".[90]

In seeking to define their task over and against the limitations of previous models, historians such as Joan Scott and Elizabeth Fox-Genovese have proffered gender as a welcome departure from the separatist rhetoric of women's history. Segregating the study of women as a discrete socio-historical grouping effectively reinforces a static model of polarized relations between female and male they argue, confirming rather than challenging female stereotypes.[91] Bringing together the study of the sexes proposes a more authentic placing of men and women in history and elucidates the interdependence of sexual identity. Masculinity and femininity are relational constructs, "incomprehensible apart from the totality of gender relations".[92] Critics of this approach have replied that gender "decentres the study of women *as* women".[93] According to Purvis, in giving equal space to male and female, gender, a more neutral and therefore acceptable discourse to mainstream history, deradicalizes and depoliticizes previous theoretical models of "women's history" and "feminist history".[94] Gender historians observe that they have gone beyond the sheer inflexibility of the female oppression/liberation dualism typical of feminist historical methodology. Yet attention to men's studies rejoins Lois Banner, can seriously undermine the original challenge of feminist history by playing down male power and privilege, thereby diminishing the impact of patriarchy.[95]

In a helpful discussion of this theoretical tension, John Tosh and Michael Roper have demonstrated that an emphasis on the changing and varied historical forms of masculinity need not be "necessarily uncongenial to feminism".[96] A clear connection exists between feminist history's focus on patriarchy and gender history's call for more informed perspectives on masculinity that is particularly promising for the study of religion. After all, understanding the position of religious women in the past "requires not only an engagement with the experience of the oppressed, but an insight into the structures of domination".[97] Thus, feminist historians' emphasis upon the institutional aspects of patriarchy is incomplete in that it fails to bring out in sufficient detail the gendered

identities of individual men and their relations with each other. As Tosh and Roper have argued, without a fuller understanding of "why men sought to control and exploit women", we run the risk of "returning to themes of an inherent male tendency towards domination",[98] and the obfuscation of the complex connections between masculinity and ecclesiastical power. Understanding men's power over women as a central organizing principle of masculinity may provide some limited common ground between gender and feminist historians. Yet a too exclusive focus on *either* men *or* women remains the dominant tendency in gender history. There is a long way to go before gender is a truly relational concept in which women appear as significant figures in the public lives of men, and men are conversely depicted in the private, "feminine" world of home and family.[99]

1.4.iv Gender history II - poststructuralist readings.

Recent interpretations of gender in history have shifted away from the causes and effects of the social organization of sexual difference to a poststructuralist emphasis upon textual analyses of the varied, conflicting *meanings* attached to gender. Here, as Joan Scott has explained in her seminal *Gender and the Politics of History* (1988), "the story is no longer about the things that have happened to women and men and how they have reacted to them; instead it is about how the subjective and collective meanings of women and men as categories of identity have been constructed".[100] In this theoretical model, gender is studied not through material experience, but through language and discourse in an attempt to discern how knowledge of sexual difference is articulated and given certain meaning at specific historical moments. Underpinning the postmodern project is a thoroughgoing relativization of knowledge, truth and subjectivity. Historians such as Scott and Denise Riley for example, have rejected the essentialist basis of the "self" as some unchanging biological given. They argue that no unitary, transhistorical category of "woman" or "man" exists, but only the constant renegotiation of competing cultural representations of masculinity and femininity.[101] In the absence of any external, objective claims to truth, sexual difference is ascribed meaning through discourse.

Understood in its Foucauldian sense, discourse may be defined as "a linguistic unity or group of statements which constitutes and delimits a specific area of concern, governed by its own rules of formation with its own modes of distinguishing truth from falsity".[102] Discourse *produces* knowledge, it does not describe pre-existing objects. Similarly, in a poststructuralist reading, gender does not reflect "fixed and natural physical differences between men and women; rather gender is the knowledge that establishes meanings for bodily differences".[103]

A set of practices as well as beliefs, discourses are embedded in varying organizational technologies which help inform, classify and circulate competing definitions of knowledge. Throughout the nineteenth-century, dominant discourses such as that of the Church, law, politics and science operated upon the available cultural symbols of femininity and masculinity, producing multiple and often contradictory representations of gender.[104] As noted earlier, the contestation of these representations is an undertaking full of potential for studies in Victorian religion. According to discourse theory, the role of the religious historian would be to trace the process through which gender was articulated by discursive religious practices, popular or institutional, and why certain constructions of womanhood and manhood emerged in particular socio-historical settings.[105]

I have already intimated the difficulties concerning the tenuous relationship between ideology and social practice prompted by the use of prescriptive texts. It is impossible of course, to equate behavioural models proposed in domestic handbooks or religious periodicals with the way in which people actually thought or conducted themselves. Because postmodern readings of gender deal primarily with the issue of the reciprocal shaping force between social reality and cultural representation, they provide a useful framework for approaching didactic texts. Discourse theory acknowledges literary narratives outright as products of human agency. Narratives are ideological and social constructions that are less descriptions of material reality than reflections of a shifting

system of cultural values. In the search for authorial intent, discourse theory can elicit careful examination of texts for the revelation of covert messages, asking questions which the documents themselves do not ask and deconstructing the seeming transparency of language to reveal the historical and political positioning of the writer. Educated, pious women like Hopkins, as well as clergymen, made substantial contributions to defining normative identities of femininity and masculinity, espousing meanings of gender that resonated very differently in specific historical contexts. In the light of the abundance of unexplored prescriptive tracts devoted to such themes as motherhood, Christian manliness, marriage and domesticity, and indeed to a wide range of subjects less explicitly concerned with sexual relations, I believe that discourse theory can enable the history of gender and religion to extend beyond its valid, compensatory function as corrective to the incomplete record of the past, and embrace a related critical project, revealing the way in which religious discourse has operated historically "as a site of the production of gender knowledge",[106] and under what circumstances.

As an aid to understanding gender, the "linguistic turn" in history has not passed unchallenged, however.[107] Serious reservations have been expressed concerning the focus on cultural representation as opposed to tangible reality, with historians viewing the poststructuralist's antipathy towards the material world as undermining the very foundations of the historical enterprise. As Lawrence Stone has commented, if we can only access the "real" of history through its representational forms, "history as we have known it collapses altogether, and fact and fiction become indistinguishable from one another".[108] Women historians such as Joan Hoff and Stevi Jackson have expressed particular disquietude at postmodernism's anti-experientialist predilections in which representations of the female self as infinitely diffuse appear to abstract and intellectualize inequalities out of existence.[109] As little more than a series of disembodied social constructs, women become disconnected from their own historical experiences, and disempowered from historical agency. Gender may have no basis in nature, argues Hoff, but it must rest on material foundations, or we deny women a position from which

to speak and the possibility of a collective feminist political stance is undercut:

> Poststructuralism casts into doubt stable meanings and sees language as so slippery that it compromises the historian's ability to identify facts and chronological narratives and uses gender as a category of analysis to reduce the experiences of women, struggling to define themselves and better their lives in particular historical contexts to mere subjective stories.[110]

Reconstructing women's religious history, where the "contributions' paradigm" is still very much the dominant one, requires methods of research which are grounded in concrete historical realities. Thus, discourse analysis can be a useful methodological tool *only* if it avoids the excesses of anti-essentialism and extreme relativism. Religion and gender history cannot be written without some consensus notion of what women and men are. My appropriation of discourse theory does not advocate the mere juxtaposition of culturally isolated scripts, but seeks to ground social purity discourse firmly within the religious and social milieu of its authors. Ultimately, material conditions produce texts and subjects. Yet a meaningful account of human experience cannot be achieved without reference to the way in which those subjects are interpreted culturally. This interdependence of historical reality and symbolic representation, and how shifts in the discursive meanings of gender related to changes in people's actual lived experiences is the methodological challenge of postmodernism that lies ahead.

In Chapter 2, I continue my appraisal of the methodological and conceptual possibilities of religion and gender history with an examination of religion as an analytical historical variable in secular women's history.

CHAPTER 2:

WOMEN'S HISTORY AND THE ROLE OF RELIGION

2.1 THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF RELIGION IN WOMEN'S HISTORY.

Contemporary religion and gender scholarship has always been closely affiliated with and drawn heavily upon theoretical developments in women's studies. Similarly, historical perspectives on women and religion can learn a great deal from its secular counterpart, women's history. As I have demonstrated in Chapter 1, the women's history approach has consistently profiled and prioritized advances in historical methodology. In arguing for a new theoretical imperative in the history of religion and gender therefore, my related objective is to promote greater cognizance by secular women historians of the value of religion in all its social and ideological forms, as an analytical category of immense significance in the reconstruction of Victorian women's lives. Focusing mainly upon the legal, economic and political aspects of emancipation, women historians have viewed the feminist component of religiously inspired movements, such as temperance or missionary work, with real suspicion.[1] Patricia Crawford has argued that in addition to the formative role played by religious hierarchies in the dynamics of female oppression, this is because the religious subject can appear unexciting - all too often "the godly woman was the successfully socialised woman".[2] Yet, as Malmgreen has commented, "If feminist historians ignore religion...we will have forfeited our understanding of the mental universe of the no doubt substantial majority of women who were believers".[3]

As arguably the two most formative ideological influences upon nineteenth-century women, the historical configuration between religious affiliation and feminism is central to my thesis. The social or emotional effects of faith cannot be restricted to the devoted adherents of religious orthodoxy as implied by Malmgreen, however. Rather, the mental horizons of radical feminists who rejected the constraints of conventional forms of

religion were equally shaped by its residual influence in their embracing of heterodox spiritual alternatives or rationalistic forms of atheism.[4] In this way, the explicit or implicit power of religion as a force for personal and political change is further underscored. Despite their innate scepticism towards issues of faith, historians of women have been amongst some of the most creative and productive commentators on the ambivalent response of the Christian tradition to the female presence, providing a wide-ranging framework of themes for further research. In the following section I trace the major approaches to religion adopted by women's history in order to delineate some of these themes and to locate my own work on purity feminism within its appropriate historiographical context. In 1981, American historian Kathryn Kish Sklar undertook an assessment of the way in which secular women historians' views of religion had developed during the preceding fifteen years.[5] Her historiography of the key stages of change was based on a firm belief that the disciplines of ecclesiastical history and women's history had much to offer each other. The following survey, the first analogous attempt for the British scene, is indebted to Sklar's original structure and reference will be made to American historians for comparison and contrast where necessary.[6]

2.1.i The separation of the spheres.

In the search for a comprehensive analysis of the origins of female subjugation, early reconstructions of nineteenth-century women's history specified not only material structures of oppression but also the powerful ideological constraints placed upon women. It was discovered that what Alexis de Tocqueville had referred to in 1835 as the "separation of the spheres" permeated Victorian discourse. Thus, the ideologies of the differentiated realms of female and male activity, particularly the confinement of woman's sphere to the "narrow circle of domestic life", appeared a promising analytical focus for historians of women writing in the 1960s.[7] Approaches to religion, which in this first

historiographical stage can best be defined in terms of negativity or sheer neglect, were also predominantly ideological, dominated by adverse assessments of the role of evangelical Protestantism in the formulation of a highly oppressive construction of femininity.

In her seminal article "The Cult of True Womanhood" (1966), American historian Barbara Welter established the centrality of the separate spheres ideology as a theoretical tool with which to describe the social and spatial relations between the two sexes. Welter construed religion as a bastion of ideological orthodoxy and the major facilitator of women's increasing domestication and curtailment of freedom. Based on a survey of popular women's fiction and prescriptive literature, she identified the propagation of a pervasive feminine stereotype whose cardinal virtues - domesticity, piety, purity and submissiveness - were sanctioned by religious values. As Linda Kerber later observed, the choice of the word "cult" was a pejorative one. It characterised the early-Victorian woman as "the hostage in the home", victim to a male-imposed ideology in which "men were the movers, the doers, the actors...[and] women...the passive, submissive responders".[8] Welter's metaphor of the "cult" was widely adopted as indicative of Victorian socio-sexual inequality. Further theoretical refinements reinforced the deleterious influence of religious doctrines of femininity. Evangelical designations of womanhood were clearly synonymous with female subordination it was argued, as conveyed in the early nineteenth-century revivalist emphasis upon biblical maxims and preaching texts that urged female obedience and submission as well as hierarchical family relations.

By comparison, British women's history which was preoccupied with the overwhelmingly secular language of Marxist feminism and class politics for the first decade of its existence, offered little in the way of sustained analysis of nineteenth-century religious ideology.[9] The socialist-feminist dominance of the British scene led to a very different series of investigative projects in which the separation of the spheres, or

the private/public dichotomy, was translated primarily in terms of its labour-related and economic ramifications for women. The majority of British publications in the early 1970s evinced a fairly narrow concept of feminism defined predominantly as the demand for suffrage.[10] From a semantic stance such as this, with the origins and subsequent resolution of women's inferior status analysed in terms of economic and political dislocation, religious perspectives appeared conspicuous only by their absence. When they *were* incorporated into the analysis, as in Sheila Rowbotham's foundational text *Hidden from History* (1973), religion was portrayed as an outdated social relic unable to respond to the demands of a newly industrialized culture and consequently eclipsed by the emergence of a secular, class-conscious socialism.

In 1979, however, British historian Catherine Hall produced a sophisticated account of "The early formation of Victorian domestic ideology" which was instructive in its treatment of religion on two counts. Not only did she provide a sharper working definition of evangelicalism than previous historians, but in her detailed description of post-Wilberforce Anglican reformism she illustrated the extent to which religion acted as conservator of both gender and class identities. According to Hall, evangelical ideals of pious womanhood were constructed in response to the rapid social upheaval of the perceived immorality of the marketplace. The Christian home, presided over by the virtuous wife and mother, was designated "a protected space in a hostile world, from which the great campaign of evangelisation could be securely launched".[11] The consolidation of women's primary familial role functioned as a crucial ideological framework for the emergence of the Victorian bourgeoisie she contended, establishing and maintaining class divisions based upon received evangelical notions of moral respectability.

The "feminization of religion" referred to in Chapter 1 was defined by women historians as emerging out of the separate spheres ideology and the subsequent conflation of woman's sphere with the affective, moral and religious aspects of nineteenth-century

culture. This process rendered both women and the church as marginalized casualties of modernization. "Increasingly in a political world", Welter wrote in 1974, "women and the church stood out as anti-political forces...in an increasingly materialistic society, dominated by a new species, Economic Man".[12] Shrouded in the flattering rhetoric of moral superiority, the relegation of religion to the privatized, feminine sphere was a blatant indication of its diminishing significance as an index of social and cultural advance - "both...were to be above the counting house...[woman] on her pedestal, the church in its sanctuary".[13] Although Welter's "The Feminization of American Religion 1800-1860" intimated a more positive reading of female-dominated church membership, initial representations of this phenomenon were generally pessimistic, viewed as a reflection of the increasing powerlessness of both women and the church.[14] This first phase in the historical analysis of the dynamics between women and religion was summarized well by the later observations of Barbara Taylor:

> ...once God had settled into the parlour, Mammon had free range in public life - and the exclusion of women from virtually all areas of public existence guaranteed that this tidy division was maintained. An ideal of femininity which combined holy love with social subordination not only served to suppress women, it also tamed and contained the anti-capitalistic implications of Christian love itself...an elision of spiritual power with social impotence.[15]

2.1.ii Religion, women's culture and female associations.

In the second historiographical stage of the representation of religion very different questions were being asked. As Sklar commented, "Now scholars paid less attention to...How did religion and society oppress women? and more to, How did women benefit, personally and socially, from their religious beliefs?".[16] The reassessment of religious affiliation as a source of potentially positive self-expression occurred as a result of fundamental theoretical changes in women's history. Concerned with the emphasis on women as solely passive respondents to external forces, Carroll Smith-Rosenberg's article "The Female World of Love and Ritual" (1975), was a

groundbreaking attempt to present women as active agents in their own history.[17] Smith-Rosenberg argued that the nineteenth-century separation of the spheres had resulted in the creation of an autonomous female world ritualized by the main events of a woman's life-cycle and circumscribed by the social institutions of family, neighbourhood and church. Her depiction of a rich and supportive female subculture forged from shared experiences, denoted a historiographical shift from the charting of sexual inequality and subjugation to the extolling of an authoritative female matrix which fostered individual autonomy and group solidarity. "Women who had little status or power in the larger world of male concerns", observed Smith-Rosenberg, "possessed status and power in the lives and worlds of other women".[18]

Redirecting their study towards the interior existence of a self-conscious women's culture, historians discovered the "inescapable importance of religion in the lives of nineteenth- century women".[19] Scholars now contended that women's perceived natural disposition towards religion constituted a powerful rationale for the extension of their domestic role as moral and spiritual custodians into the public world of philanthropic endeavour.[20] Frank Prochaska's *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenth Century England* (1980) argued that institutionalized forms of religion provided a key social context in which women might make purposeful contributions to the community. In its primary appeal to social duty and active service, evangelical religion proved the perfect outlet for the respectable middle-class Christian woman anxious to accrue a sense of purpose or some personal esteem in her life. Presenting a wealth of empirical evidence for the enormous variety of charitable activities undertaken by Victorian churchwomen, Prochaska traced their prominent contribution to parish fund-raising events; maternal and child welfare; rescue work and visiting societies attendant upon hospitals, prisons and the workhouse. He concluded that female philanthropy provided an impressive inter-denominational network of poor relief. Such observations led historians to reconsider the instrumentality of religious affiliation in the lives of Victorian women. Whether through the prayer-meeting, Sunday school or local charity, female bonding within church and

sect clearly functioned as a powerful mode of self-assertion. Despite opposition by conservative churchmen who warned of irresponsible, defeminized females incapable of effective administration or competent accountancy, women reformers demonstrated immense financial and organizational flair. Prochaska's account of the charity bazaar, a particularly female-dominated event, suggests at least one site of real contestation in managerial power between churchwomen and clergy.[21]

Nowhere was the growth of female association more emphatically displayed than in the emergence of religious sisterhoods and the deaconness communities of the mid nineteenth- century. Women historians have paid particular attention to the formation of these congregations as evidence of the communal power of women and because of the essential role they played in the provision of a fulfilling career alternative for devout single women. Martha Vicinus' *Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women 1850-1920* (1985), presented an approving profile of women's religious communities as providing a source of meaningful intellectual and emotional satisfaction for unmarried women otherwise condemned to a relegated social status and an existence of economic uncertainty. In their amelioration of the mid-Victorian problem of "redundant women",[22] and as an illustration of the dynamics of female institutional separatism, Vicinus' assessment of Anglican sisterhoods and deaconess houses was cautiously favourable. She regarded the pastoral training of middle-class women offered by the communities as performing a vital transitional function between the piecemeal, palliative philanthropy of the early nineteenth-century and the later professionalization of health and social welfare. Ironically she noted, it was the quintessential female principle of self-negation and sacrifice that constituted a major factor in the collective power and strength of the communities who carved out "an area of expertise and power within their male-dominated churches...in both their organizational autonomy and their insistence upon women's right to a separate religious life".[23] Yet unlike their secular female counterparts, who established girl's schools or women's colleges with no need of male

assistance, formal religion dictated the ongoing supervision of men. Despite the formidable autocracy of early leaders who ensured that ecclesiastical interference was kept to an absolute minimum, Vicinus concluded that female religious communities revealed "a complicated picture of institutional subordination and self-determination".[24]

The historical scholarship of the late 1970s and early 1980s with its new focus on women's culture, facilitated a far less jaundiced view of religion than previous accounts. The contradictions inherent in an ideology which defined femininity in primarily familial and domestic terms yet simultaneously stressed women's innate moral superiority, revealed surprisingly beneficial consequences through the language of philanthropy, sisterhood and associationism. Anglican sisterhoods were described as one of the most significant female communities in the nineteenth-century - "among the first to insist upon a woman's right to choose celibacy, to live communally and to do meaningful work"[25]. Correspondingly affirmative conclusions were drawn concerning female philanthropists' transformation of traditional values associated with religion and gender into "a political arsenal for the self-advancement of a sex".[26]

The methodological shift in women's history from feminist politics to women's culture, from suffrage campaigns to the everyday experiences of ordinary women actively decentred the causal centrality of political activism to reveal the religious, social and demographic factors that helped shape women's lives. "We cannot understand the public acts of a few women without understanding the private world that produced them"[27] wrote Smith-Rosenberg in 1980. Such a theoretical shift did not go uncontested, but fears that increasing interest in women's culture threatened to depoliticize the feminist historical project were ungrounded.[28] Indeed, further developments demonstrated that sustained investigation of women's culture might recast the entire history of the origins of nineteenth-century feminism. The ideological and organizational roots of the women's movement were considerably more varied and contradictory than had at first been appreciated, and religion constituted one of the most complex factors.

2.1.iii Religion and the origins of modern feminism: intellectual trends.

Women historians have considered the dialectic between religious faith and feminism in three main stages. The contribution of religion to the development of Victorian feminist theory was initially assessed in broad ideological terms. A more detailed statistical analysis of the denominational, geographical and social milieu of religious feminism followed and finally, extending the particularity of the faith/feminism dynamic even further, the role of spiritual conversion in the lives of individual feminists has undergone examination.

By the early 1980s, religion was considered a significant enough feature in the changing lives of Victorian women for Olive Banks in *Faces of Feminism. A Study of Feminism as a Social Movement* (1981) to identify evangelical Christianity as one of three major intellectual traditions operating upon nineteenth-century feminism.[29] Building upon the theories of Prochaska and others, she contended that social reform activity inspired by mid-century evangelical revivalism was generally favourable to the feminist movement, providing a safe environment from which awareness of gender issues and the exercise of leadership skills could be actively fostered. Nowhere was this more clearly demonstrated than within the Quaker tradition. Whilst they were not strictly part of the revivalist aspect of evangelicalism, the moral earnestness exhibited by Quakers resulted in a similar impetus for social reform and the ability to surrender denominational differences in the interests of common political aims. The relative autonomy afforded to women preachers and their active support of abolitionism has earned Quaker communities historical recognition as the major religious wellspring of British feminism. Historians have particularly noted the considerable Quaker enclaves in the National Society for Women's Suffrage and the campaign to repeal the Contagious Diseases (CD) Acts.[30]

Religious revivalism offered a productive framework through which women could express themselves in visible, public terms. Most prominently the conspicuous, confident presence of female Salvationists or "bonneted Amazons"[31] throughout the London

streets extended the boundaries of working women's space and "made an important contribution to women's emancipation".[32] The revivalist legacy was largely construed as an ambivalent one, however, prompting "both conservative and radical possibilities for the situation of women".[33] Jane Rendall's survey in *The Origins of Modern Feminism.Women in Britain, France and the United States 1780-1860* (1985) indicated that whilst evangelicalism provided a comprehensive re-evaluation of women's domestic status, the orthodox exaltation of female moral superiority ultimately served to limit the radical potential of subsequent feminist vision. Involvement in philanthropic enterprises did not necessarily lead to the disputing of traditional gender roles or the dissolution of the separate spheres ideology. In a discussion of the relationship between philanthropy and suffrage, Prochaska had previously shown that moral reform activity with its reinforcement of the biblical profile of the submissive, maternal female, often proved diversionary from more specifically feminist projects. Whilst the campaign for suffrage drew heavily on the organizational aspects of philanthropy, "benevolent women did not invariably support the female franchise".[34] Thus the attempt to establish causal links between evangelicalism and feminism defied an unequivocal connection. The relationship was appraised by Banks as one of deep-rooted ambiguity:

> To a large extent...the effect of the evangelical movement on feminism was to be conservative rather than radical, and even when it led women outside the home it was primarily to bring the domestic virtues into the public domain...in so far as it was radical at all, it was in the attempt to 'feminize' the public sphere by bringing to it the values associated with the home.[35]

Scholarship at this point compared the United States advantageously with Britain when delineating the proto-feminist elements of religiously inspired projects such as temperance, abolitionism or rescue work with prostitutes.[36] Although evangelicalism was regarded as an important conduit through which women could gain entry to the public sphere, Unitarianism was assessed most favourably as an intellectual impetus for

British feminism. According to Rendall, "Unitarianism was to provide, perhaps because of its very distance from other congregations, an important route to feminism and a source of egalitarian views about the relationships between the sexes".[37] As prominent supporters of parliamentary reform, Unitarian belief in the power of reason, natural rights, freedom and toleration had prompted a long tradition of political agitation and subsequent persecution. A strong reform milieu and sense of social injustice in addition to the advocacy of female education, were major factors in the receptiveness of Unitarians to feminist doctrines. A proportionately high number of early feminist leaders were Unitarians and their doctrines continued to receive more than a passing interest from major feminist thinkers throughout the century.[38]

2.1.iii.a Religion and the origins of modern feminism: prosopographic studies.

As an indicator of the form and content of feminist predilections, religion took on an increasingly detailed focus throughout the 1980s with the emergence of two important prosopographic studies.[39] Examining the social backgrounds of selected samples of nineteenth-century feminists, Olive Banks' *Becoming a Feminist: The Social Origins of 'First Wave' Feminism* (1986) and Philippa Levine's *Feminist Lives in Victorian Britain* (1990) both incorporated religious affiliation as a salient category of analysis. While no straightforward consonance was assumed between faith and feminist practice, certain patterns were found to emerge. In an impressive systematic study of four generations of Victorian feminists, Banks noted "the wide variety of religious beliefs that appeared to be compatible with feminism" ranging from "atheists and freethinkers to Anglicans, and in three cases, all converts, Roman Catholics".[40] In the first cohort of feminists examined (women born before 1828), those with "positive religious affiliations" were in a majority of 58%. Quakers and Unitarians figured prominently, as did a surprisingly high number of Anglicans.[41] Despite mounting cultural indifference to institutionalized forms of worship, the fourth and final cohort (women born between 1872 and 1891), still showed 35% of feminists with clear spiritual alliances. From her statistical survey, Banks concluded that "religion remained...a significant if diminishing aspect of the feminist

tradition...even after it had been taken over by socialism".[42]

Levine's study revealed similar observations. Despite the ambivalence of the Christian message for women and the unceasing advance of secularization, religion was rarely rejected wholesale she noted, and retained a high profile amongst the women's movement.[43] Levine's work reiterated the denominational ascendancy of Unitarianism and Quakerism within the feminist community based upon common principles of dissent. Her construction of a "religious geography" of feminism demonstrated the frequent overlap between feminism and nonconformity in centres such as London, Birmingham, Bristol and Lancashire, from which she contended that concentrations of "sympathetic religious radicals"[44] were responsible for nurturing a distinctive regional pattern in the evolution of feminism.

Family background and class origins also appeared to have figured prominently in the predisposition to faith. Of feminists from the gentry class, 80% showed positive religious affiliation, in comparison with only 19% of working-class feminists. With Evangelicalism drawing mainly from the middle and upper classes, the national picture with regard to the progressive alienation of the labouring poor from formal religious activity was borne out by members of the women's movement, with working-class feminists displaying the largest proportion of "no known religious affiliation" at 50%. "In general terms", Banks concluded, "the more radical the political position, the more radical or at least the more sceptical the position with respect to religious affiliation".[45]

From these chronological samples, an initial profile of nineteenth-century religious feminism began to emerge. It appeared to have retained a distinct character of its own representing selected forms of feminist involvement and ideology not unconnected with the political conservatism of its adherents. According to Banks' study, less emphasis was placed upon equal rights by religiously affiliated feminists and more upon those issues to do with welfare - whether of unmarried women or of mothers and children. In order of

diminishing support, 46% of religiously affiliated feminists campaigned for the cause of "unmarried women" - single women who required useful employment and economic self-sufficiency; an ideology of "complementary roles" was advocated by 36%, including many philanthropists who, whilst they posited traditional differences between the sexes, did not necessarily espouse female subordination or the exclusion of women from the public sphere; about a third of all religious feminists opposed the double standard of sexual morality (to be discussed in fuller detail later), and 28% supported a woman's right to "autonomy" - the ability to fashion a separate and self-defined identity outside of male norms.[46] Little support was shown for those causes which challenged orthodox gender roles or sought radical revisions of conventional family structure. Broadly defined at this incipient stage, Victorian religious feminism promoted an ideology in which the complementary roles of the sexes were never really questioned, and where greater emphasis was placed upon women's duties than women's rights. In its assertion of female moral superiority, religious feminism "served to strengthen the women's movement by bringing into its campaigns a number of women who would not have been motivated by the desire for equality".[47] Without retracting original assessments of the fundamentally conservative ramifications of much evangelical feminism therefore, it became possible for feminist historians to recognize the enormous strategic significance of religion.

2.1.iii.b Religion and the origins of modern feminism: spiritual biographies.

Most recently, women historians have examined the faith/feminism dynamic in terms of the biographical genre, an approach of obvious relevance to this thesis. Barbara Caine has argued that detailed analysis of the personal and familial experiences of individual women can help to explain "both the genesis of their feminism and the nature of their particular...analysis or commitment".[48] Eschewing biographical conventions of "the exceptional individual", feminist historians have sought to delineate how certain women experienced their social and domestic worlds; how they negotiated the constraining

structures of those worlds; what strategies of self-emancipation they employed, if any, and at what cost to themselves.[49] Spiritual and psychological crises have figured greatly in this micro-historical approach. According to Caine, "The example of a religious crisis in the formation of feminist consciousness is particularly useful...[when] concentrating on nineteenth-century women, because it was a central issue for so many".[50] The survey by Levine showed a proportionately high incidence of feminists as having experienced either a spiritual or denominational conversion, illustrating the seriousness with which many women took their faith. Her examples included the Anglican Susannah Winkworth's embracing of Unitarianism, Bessie Rayner Parkes' conversion to Catholicism and the attraction of the more mystical elements of the Christian tradition to certain feminists.[51]

The profound connection between spiritual awakenings, religious convictions and feminist ideals was further outlined by biographical studies such as Caine's *Victorian Feminists* (1992), which dealt at length with the spiritual struggles of Josephine Butler and Frances Power Cobbe. Similarly, Elaine Showalter's article on "Florence Nightingale's Feminist Complaint" (1981) demonstrated the role of religion in the genesis of Nightingale's "peculiar feminism".[52] Such scholarship highlighted the diverse effects of faith upon feminist endeavours. Whereas Butler's affirmation of an intimate personal relationship with Christ inspired a career of considerable achievement in feminist moral reform for example, it was Cobbe's *rejection* of her Anglican family religion in favour of a theistic belief in a rational benevolent Deity that provided the foundation of her distinctive egalitarian feminist philosophy.[53] In order to explore the interior reflection of what it meant to be female and religious within a specific historical period, use of the biographical perspective can be extremely illuminating. As this thesis will illustrate, by studying the life history of one woman it is possible to give real texture to and concretize the wider context of female, or feminist religious existence.

It would be unwise to overestimate the significance of religion as a focus in secular

women's history as the majority of scholarship is still directed towards issues of class, health, education, employment and the family. Nevertheless, this historiographical overview has shown that an acknowledgment of the pervasive influence of religious beliefs in the lives of nineteenth-century women has to a large extent replaced earlier sceptical, dismissive attitudes. The focus of my thesis, late nineteenth-century feminist moral and sexual reform provides an excellent illustration of this intellectual shift. An area of lively and heated debate, the topic of feminist sexual politics propounds many of the responses to the social and ideological aspects of religion outlined so far. Because of their fundamentally ethical basis, and for reasons that will become evident below, the campaigns surrounding sexual morality are particularly germane to an examination of the historical faith/feminism dialectic.

2.2 LATE-VICTORIAN FEMINIST SEXUAL POLITICS.

As Margaret Jackson has observed, "the challenge to the specifically sexual basis of male power was central to Victorian and Edwardian feminism".[54] The recognition of the marked congruence between the personal and political dimensions of female subordination, that inequalities in the private sphere mirrored and structured inequalities in the public realm, made the area of sexual morality a crucial site of feminist attack in the nineteenth-century.[55] Campaigns around marriage, spinsterhood, prostitution and fertility control, and the assertion of women's right to full sexual autonomy comprised a major onslaught against the double standard of sexual morality whereby sexual desire was acknowledged as "natural" and healthy in men, but pathologized in women. In challenging the dominant patriarchal model of sexual relations, Victorian feminists argued that aggressive male passion was no straightforward biological phenomenon, but a socially constructed ideology which sanctioned female sexual objectification.[56]

The first feminist campaign against the sexual double standard which demonstrated this politicized interpretation of sexuality was the agitation against the implementation of the

Contagious Diseases (CD) Acts. A series of measures introduced during the late 1860s in response to official concern over rising levels of venereal disease in the armed forces, the CD Acts were Britain's only experiment with state regulated prostitution. They legislated for compulsory, periodic sanitary examinations of women suspected of being prostitutes in garrison towns and ports throughout England. They also prompted the emergence of the now-celebrated repeal campaign which, under the charismatic leadership of Josephine Butler, opposed the Acts as an infringement of women's civil rights and brought them to a premature demise in 1883.[57]

The subject of my thesis, the movement for social purity, emerged in the early 1880s heartened by the success of the repealers. Social purity was differentiated from its predecessors by a broader-based challenge to the moral double standard which incorporated agitation against the sexual abuse of children and the international trafficking in women. Sensationalist revelations on "white slavery" published by the journalist W. T. Stead in 1885 described the forcible abduction and sacrifice of young women to the bestial appetites of debauched aristocrats. Entitled "The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon", the relationship of these articles to the purity movement will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4. Suffice it to say, they provoked a sufficiently outraged public response to ensure that sexual politics remained a dominant theme on the feminist agenda well into the following century.

The demand for male chastity and the transformation of existing moral standards remained a central component of early twentieth-century militant feminism. As their slogan, "Votes for Women, Chastity for Men!" suggested, the suffragettes made an explicit link between sexual and political inferiority.[58] Many leading feminists such as Millicent Fawcett, who was President of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies and head of the Rescue and Preventive sub-committee of the National Vigilance Association (NVA), combined support for female suffrage with membership of purity organizations. Like many leading suffragette spokeswomen, Christabel Pankhurst

declared male sexuality as a brutal, powerful weapon against women and asserted female celibacy as a deliberate, positive political statement. "There can be no mating between the spiritually developed women of this new day and men who in thought and conduct with regard to sex matters are their inferiors" [59] she wrote in 1913.

An uncritical acceptance of the physical powerlessness and vulnerability of women meant that prior to 1914, the feminist politicization of sexuality comprised almost exclusively of warnings to women concerning the potential dangers of sex, rather than encouraging the pursuit of sexual pleasure. As Ellen DuBois and Linda Gordon have noted, feminism's "appraisal of women's sexual victimization was not, on balance, offset by recognition of women's potential for sexual activity and enjoyment".[60] In a context where lack of financial independence rendered marriage the sole option for most women and where sexuality, conflated with reproduction, was firmly anchored within the same institution, the ambivalence of feminist attitudes towards "free unions" was not surprising. Feminists sought in ever more strident, articulate fashion to transform existing inequitable sexual codes into a single standard of morality by enjoining a higher ethical precept upon men, as opposed to advocating greater sexual freedom for women. As the feminist paper, the *Woman's Signal* declared in 1894, the women's movement was a rebellion "that is Puritan and not Bohemian....an uprising against the tyranny of organized intemperance, impurity, mammonism, and selfish motives".[61]

2.3 RELIGION AND SEXUAL DISCOURSE.

The elision of sexuality and morality meant that religious precepts played a significant ideological and discursive role in these campaigns. As Butler commented in her *Personal Reminiscences of a Great Crusade* (1896), the repeal campaign had not been so much "the revolt of a sex" as witness to "the depth and sincerity of the moral and religious convictions of the mass of the population".[62] From the evangelical Anglican Butler, to

her High Church successor in the social purity movement Ellice Hopkins, religious women dominated the organization and discourse of Victorian feminist sexual politics, redefining the ecclesiastical sanctification of women as custodians of familial morality in an unprecedented subversion of its original intent.

Lynda Nead has argued that, despite the state's wresting of key legislative responsibilities away from ecclesiastical jurisdiction concerning the regulation of morality, "Christianity continued to function as the primary validating force".[63] Although definitions of gender and sexuality were increasingly couched in medical scientific terms, religion remained the basic moral framework within which such discourses competed for power. Indeed, as the following chapters will show, social purity feminism displayed great creativity in its synthesis of religious and scientific expression, creating a coherent, moral evolutionist perspective that sought to maintain contemporary relevance whilst upholding the primacy of Christian values. In delineating the concern with constructions of sexual identity on the part of such an unlikely group of commentators as Victorian churchwomen, my study assumes a strategic relationship between sexual and religious discourse. John Maynard has argued in his introduction to *Victorian Discourses of Sexuality and Religion* (1993) that "sexual discussion is anything but free from religious issues and traces".[64] Interpretations that stigmatize historical or contemporary forms of western religion as antithetical to sexuality misunderstand their reciprocal interdependence:

> Created out of human's and societies' need to make some sense out of their greatest experiences, both discourses, of religion and sex, tend to parallel each other in articulating larger structures of meaning or organisation around simple cores of ritual and symbol; and each regularly draws on the structure, detail, or accumulating power of the other to promote its discourse.[65]

Asserting the interconnectedness of religious and sexual discourse is not to posit their

uniformity of expression, although as Chapter 7 of this thesis will illustrate, a certain parity can occur at moments of heightened ecstasy. A more accurate description of their relationship in a late-Victorian context is Diane MacDonnell's notion of "meaningful antagonisms".[66] MacDonnell uses this term to underscore an interpretation of discourse in which meaning is conveyed oppositionally through contrast and difference, pivoting on negation or repression of its antithesis. My thesis advances the similar view that Victorian discourses of sexuality and religion were highly collaborative, deriving their meaning from contrary but inextricable allegiances. Throughout the mid and late nineteenth-century, hierarchical religious negations of sexuality spawned even greater elaboration of moral dialogue, a process that in turn catalysed the emergence of an overt religio-sexual discourse as articulated by Hopkins and the movement for social purity. In its efforts to expel the social evil of female sexual abuse, purity feminists found themselves promoting a regulatory, but nonetheless extremely public religious discourse of sex.

2.4 HISTORIANS' APPROACHES TO FEMINISM AND SOCIAL PURITY.

Conventional understandings of the epithet "Victorian" connote images of puritanical repressiveness and austere sexual codes which even revisionist historians, influenced by Foucauldian assertions of nineteenth-century volubility on sex, have succumbed to in their definition of social purity as the high water-mark of Victorian anti-sensualism. Edward Bristow's seminal work *Vice and Vigilance: Purity Movements in Britain since 1700* (1977) for example, locates the 1880s purity campaigns as the third of four historical peaks of anti-vice agitation and "the most peculiar of the many forms of voluntary effort that have flourished in British society".[67] According to Bristow, the social, educational and psychological impact of social purity was overwhelmingly negative. During a period in which "enlightened" modern sexual theory was in its nascent stages, purity reformers perpetuated sexual myths "reflecting the belief that sex was a nasty appetite to be curbed by faith, cold water and lessons in good citizenship"[68]

and retarded the acceptance of new, advanced opinions. He concludes that channelled by waves of "anti-sexual energy against the erotic",[69] purity ultimately fostered the harrassment of prostitutes and the systematic censorship of serious art and popular entertainment.

Such an appraisal fails to appreciate the feminist critique of the sexual double standard contained within purity agitation. Yet many women historians have been equally uncomfortable with feminism's apparently prudish attitudes towards sex. As Michael Mason has observed, scholars like Constance Rover were "frankly alienated"[70] by the attachment of leading feminists to the anti-libertarian, anti-progressive factions in the debates surrounding sexuality at the end of the century. The growing recognition that the case for sexual liberation in terms of voluntary sexual liaisons and contraception, "was self-servingly devised by men and spurious in its concern for women",[71] registered anti-sensualism as more intrinsic than adventitious to the feminist agenda amongst historians. Whilst this development has produced enthusiastic readings of Butler's repeal campaign, notably Judith Walkowitz's *Prostitution and Victorian Society*, social purity has been interpreted in a considerably less sympathetic light. Caricatured variously as repressive, puritanical and prurient, the increased visibility and strength of purity feminism in the 1880s has been regarded by historians such as Walkowitz, Nancy Wood and Deborah Gorham as superseding and fundamentally contradicting the original premises of repeal.[72] Repeal activism wrote Walkowitz in 1980, "did not end triumphantly with with the removal of the CD Acts from the statute books in 1886, but more ominously with the rise of social-purity crusades and with police crackdowns on streetwalkers and brothel-keepers".[73] Such has been the antipathy of feminist historians towards post-repeal sexual politics, that the complicity of feminist repealers in the early stages of the purity movement was explained away as a "seduction"[74] by more conservative, reactionary figures, of whom Hopkins has had the dubious accolade of being designated leading representative. Perceived as a form of "ideological infection"[75] arising out of socio-

religious interests and concerned primarily with the regulation and socialization of working-class sexuality, the new purity offensive it was argued, dislocated moral considerations from feminist issues by failing to connect prostitution to the larger economic and political disabilities of women.

Recently, however, in an attempt to recognize the greater contradictions and fluidity of various positions, the contribution of purity workers to feminist politics has been assessed more positively. In these accounts social purity is depicted not as a deterrent to woman-centered arguments, but as a politics of revolutionary feminism whose assault against male sexuality compared with the sexual philosophy of the most radical feminist theoreticians. Sheila Jeffreys, a leading exponent of this approach, viewed Hopkins' moralistic rhetoric and militant discourse on female sexual degradation as essentially compatible with that of outspoken female suffragists such as Elizabeth Wolstenholme Elmy. Unlike their male purity counterparts whose motives were dominated by the desire for a general eradication of vice regardless of means or consequence she argues, women purity workers were inspired by a genuine concern to prevent the exploitation of their own sex.[76]

According to feminist and cultural historians of sexuality, the moralizing discourse of purity women formed a vital dimension in the practical development of feminist sexual politics. In *Dangerous Sexualities: Medico-Moral Politics in England since 1830* (1987), Frank Mort observes that the purity feminism espoused by Hopkins typically combined "a feminist commitment to challenging male sexual behaviour, with traditional beliefs in moralizing philanthropy directed at the poor".[77] Making use of arguments similar to those suggested by Prochaska concerning the domestication of the public sphere, Mort contended that women were empowered to enter into sexual political debates in defence of themselves and other (working-class) women through the traditional Christian language of female moral superiority. Radical demands for male chastity and self-control

were sanctioned by the appropriation of a perfectly conventional feminine rhetoric of moral purity. "Religious language provided women with a powerful critique of male sexuality, a language of outrage which gave them their means of representation into the male world of public political debate".[78]

Lucy Bland's recent examination of the Congregationalist purity worker Laura Ormiston Chant also demonstrates alternative, more positive nuances in the elucidation of the feminism/morality dialectic. In *Banishing the Beast. English Feminism and Sexual Morality 1885-1914* (1995), she describes Ormiston Chant's concern with the indecent leisure pursuits of both the working and middle-classes. After a series of investigative inspections by purity workers which caused much satirical hilarity in the liberal London press, the licences of certain music-halls and sites of popular entertainment were temporarily revoked. Rather than dismissing this activity as a prurient, pietistic impulse to "clean-up" the streets, Bland translates Ormiston Chant's moral policing as a form of feminist vigilantism intent on defending the rights of women to traverse public spaces without male interference. "Laura Chant's concern was partly about the danger of demoralization, but it was surely also about the desire to transform...sites of public entertainment into places where women could move freely without fear of attack or the accusation of non-respectability".[79] In general these latter, more circumspect analyses have been comparatively affirmative of the religious origins of the purity movement, although not without limitations. The final discussion in this chapter outlines some of these inadequacies and suggests an alternative perspective drawn from the history of religion and gender.

2.5 REDEFINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIGION AND SOCIAL PURITY.

Earlier censorious readings of purity were highly critical of its religious dimensions. Revivalism and evangelicalism were depicted as "channelling waves of sublimated anti-

sexual energy against the erotic"[80] and fuelling the implementation of repressive anti-vice techniques. While commending the practical efforts of female purity workers, Bristow trivialized their motives, suggesting that as "sublimated and suffering evangelical spinsters"[81] Hopkins and her colleagues were probably driven to rescue work by the "impulse to associate vicariously with sin".[82] Feminist reconstructions made similarly negative, over-simplistic equations between religious adherence and prudish sexual austerity, regarding purity as antipathetic to the authentic feminist principles of social equality and individualism.

More positively, religion has been acknowledged as a fundamental source of personal empowerment for women purists. "A spiritual belief must have strengthened many women in the pursuit of bodily integrity"[83] reflects Sheila Jeffreys. A faith system like Christianity which codified the benefits of avoiding sexual intercourse through the option of celibacy translated easily into the language of purity, providing the basic ideological framework from which a powerful discourse of morality emerged. It was "from religion" argues Bland, that "feminists took the ideas of women's moral superiority and of passionlessness and used them in their demand for transformed relations between the sexes".[84] Religion also facilitated the development of an increasingly confident critique of dominant constructions of masculinity. Yet despite these accessions, the relationship between faith and feminism remains a complex one in feminist sexual politics. Even in the most recent histories of sexuality, the two strands of commitment remain clearly differentiated. Margaret Jackson's assertion in *The Real Facts of Life. Feminism and the Politics* of *Sexuality c1850-1940* (1994) that "it is important to be clear that there was a crucial distinction between the puritanical and feminist demands for chastity"[85] is explained in terms of their differing relationship to patriarchy. Puritanical demands for chastity regarded sexuality as a natural, animal instinct needing to be controlled in the interests of social order. Feminist demands on the other hand, stemmed from the belief that male sexuality was a political weapon used to uphold male power. Hence the former argument for a higher level of morality functioned to maintain patriarchy and the latter, to

challenge it. Thus Jackson distinguishes between the feminist wing and a more conservative (read religious) element, who made use of restrictive anti-vice measures. She establishes this bipartite scheme of purity activism in the commendable attempt to present a more palatable impression of purity feminism and its contribution to the debunking of heterosexist myths of sexual liberation. It was not sexual puritanism she argues, but feminist rationalism, a belief "in the power of reason and the ability of human beings to exercise rational control over their sexual passions"[86] that underpinned the demands of Victorian and Edwardian women for chastity and an end to the double moral standard.

There are important errors in an approach that seeks to whitewash the less agreeable aspects of purity feminism by ascribing them to reactionary, religious factions. As my research on Hopkins will demonstrate, the polarization of puritanical and feminist demands for morality is an artificial one, produced by a deficient understanding of the discrete denominational backgrounds of purity advocates. Central to this oversight has been the indiscriminate application of the terms "revivalism" and "evangelicalism". Late nineteenth-century revivalism manifested itself in distinctive theological and organisational forms, from the American preaching tours of Moody and Sankey with their emphasis on an immediate "New Birth" to the more measured approach of the Anglo-Catholic parish-based missions.[87] In terms of motivational force therefore, revivalism might produce very different rationales and objectives concerning social purity. Uncritical use of these concepts by historians to denote the religious origins of the movement has consequently obscured the doctrinal heterogeneity from which purity discourse evolved, prohibiting more refined analyses of its composition. As my thesis demonstrates, neither feminist nor religious discourses on sex proved monolithic, but were themselves a cluster of competing expressions, incorporating a wide range of intellectual and ethical positions and some very unlikely alliances.

Despite the recognition of the discursive significance of evangelical moralism by

historians like Frank Mort and Lucy Bland, the social, symbolic and ideological function of religion has received little sustained attention in the lively debates surrounding feminism and moral reform. My exposition of Ellice Hopkins' life and writings constitutes a major recasting of existing approaches in secular women's history, challenging not only the dominant conflation of religion and evangelicalism, but the equation of religious belief with reactionary, bigoted prurience. As regards the history of religion and gender, purity campaigns provide a remarkable example of the politicization of Victorian churchwomen within the highly controversial arena of sexual reform. Hitherto, nineteenth-century religious feminism has been defined primarily in terms of the push for ordination.[88] My thesis demonstrates that, as with mainstream feminism, churchwomen were engaged in a wide network of causes for the betterment of their sex.

The theoretical framework of secular women's history has commonly appraised religious feminism as the prudent, conservative section of the women's movement.[89] This is to ignore the specific context from which religious feminists drew their strength. Purity women like Hopkins inhabited several different worlds, moving across domestic, ecclesiastical and political spheres as they campaigned for the cause of purity. Within their own religious realm they exerted enormous pressure upon the professional hierarchies of church and chapel, actively reworking Christian doctrines and symbols so as to bring the moral influence of the churches to bear upon public opinion. As shall be seen in Part 2, the full radicalism of these activities cannot be appreciated without close examination of the internal ecclesiastical debates surrounding purity, or the complex dynamics between church leadership and female purity worker.

Part Two

ELLICE HOPKINS AND THE ORIGINS OF SOCIAL PURITY

CHAPTER 3:

ELLICE HOPKINS: BACKGROUND AND INFLUENCES

3.1 EARLY-VICTORIAN CAMBRIDGE: FAMILY, FRIENDS AND FIRST INFLUENCES.

Jane Ellice Hopkins was born on October 30th, 1836, in the parish of St. Mary the Less, Cambridge. She was the youngest daughter of the four children of William Hopkins (1793-1866) and his second wife, Caroline Boys (1799-1881).[1] Brought up in the academic milieu of university life, she was educated at home by her parents. Although delicate in health as a child, she inherited an outstanding intellect and wit from her talented parents. Her mother, described only briefly as a "gentle, loving woman, highly accomplished and an excellent musician",[2] remains a shadowy figure in Hopkins' life. The few scattered references to her suggest that she was a conservative, domesticated woman for whom the controversial glare of her daughter's publicity caused some distress.[3] There was evidently not the shared understanding or depth of feeling between the two women that existed in Hopkins' relationship with her father. Ellice idolized William Hopkins and was his pupil and constant companion throughout the early years of her life. She inscribed her first volume of poetry, *English Idylls and Other Poems* (1865) to him with the lines: "These poems are dedicated by one who owes all she is and all she hopes to be to his love".[4] After his death in 1866, she continued to attribute her own intellectual powers and oratorical ability to his influence. It was he, she would argue, who had first "made it possible for her to realize the Divine Fatherhood of God".[5]

The determinative impact of William Hopkins' profession upon Ellice's later religio-sexual philosophy repays further investigation of the religious and scientific milieu of

Cambridge in the 1830s and 1840s. Entering Peterhouse, one of the smaller Cambridge colleges, after the death of his first wife, William Hopkins graduated in 1833 during a period when the controversy between religion and science was accelerating rapidly.[6] Unlike Oxford, early-Victorian Cambridge was a stronghold of liberal Anglicanism, maintaining close links between the ideals of mathematical science and natural theology.[7] With the Paleyan apologetic still at its height, nature was viewed "as a book of divine authorship",[8] with science responsible for establishing laws for the evidence of design in nature and verifying the existence of an intelligent Creator. As the Cambridge clergyman-scientist and close friend of the Hopkins' family Adam Sedgwick argued in 1832, natural theology served admirably as a harbinger of the higher moral lesson of the gospel, enabling humanity "to see the finger of God in all things animate and inanimate".[9]

Almost imperceptibly, science had begun to assert its independence from divine providence, however, and advanced conceptions of the natural order were envisaged as increasingly autonomous.[10] As a geologist, William Hopkins was heavily embroiled in scientific developments which challenged Christian orthodoxy as to the inerrancy of the Genesis narratives. Despite certain theoretical reservations he regarded Charles Lyell's groundbreaking *Principles of Geology* (1830), as an exemplary precedent for the systematization of geological science, and determined to work upon the same principle.[11] His overwhelming desire was to elevate the discipline of geology from "a somewhat vague and misty sublimity"[12] to a rank among the stricter physical sciences, thereby providing another avenue of exploration "by which man could...attain to a knowledge of so much of what is perfect and beautiful in the structure of the material universe".[13] An adherence to the theory of "catastrophism" which held that changes in geological structure consisted of epochs of volcanic action interspersed with periods of comparative tranquility, enabled him to reconcile the results of his physical investigations with biblical

accounts of the creation and the flood, albeit through a figurative as opposed to a literalist reading of the Genesis chronology.[14] As shall be seen, this blend of scientific rationalism and religious precept, a synthesis which permeated the writings of Ellice herself, displayed an intellectual and spiritual eclecticism that would influence his daughter's analyses of moral educational reform considerably.

Although a geologist and mathematician of some repute, it was as a maths "coach" or private tutor, that William Hopkins gained his most formidable reputation. Prevented from taking up a college fellowship as a result of his second marriage to Ellice's mother Caroline Boys whilst an undergraduate, he was, according to Sheldon Rothblatt, undoubtedly "the most famous of the early Victorian mathematical coaches".[15] In *Wranglers and Physicists. Studies on Cambridge Physics in the Nineteenth Century* (1985), David Wilson described Hopkins' influence upon the Mathematical Tripos as a major contribution to the distinctive character of the prestigious nineteenth-century "Cambridge school" of physics. T. A. Walker's *Admissions to Peterhouse* (1912) cited him as the uncontested "senior wrangler maker"[16] for almost thirty years. Hopkins numbered among his pupils some of the most distinguished names in English science, including the eugenicist Francis Galton, G. G. Stokes, Lord Kelvin and James Clerk Maxwell.[17] Galton's memories of Cambridge in the 1840s depicted Hopkins as an inspiring and talented teacher who conveyed his subject to his students in entertaining fashion:

> Hopkins, to use a Cantab expression is a regular brick; tells funny stories connected with different problems and is no way Donnish; he rattles on at a splendid pace and makes mathematics anything but a dry subject....I never enjoyed anything so much before.[18]

Coaching was demanding, fiercely competitive work with professional and financial

success measured by the ability to drill the student for the highest place possible in the exam lists.[19] It was possible for a tutor of Hopkins' stature to earn between £700 and £800 per academic year. This was certainly in excess of a college fellowship, and almost the equivalent of a professorial or upper middle-class income.[20] It is safe to assume, therefore, that Ellice spent her youth in relative material comfort as well as ample intellectual and cultural stimulation.

Excerpts from a paper written just prior to her death, entitled "Gods in Exile" give some idea of the distinguished social circles she and her family moved in.[21] Holidays during the late 1850s and early 1860s were spent in the company of some of the most notable figures in the world of literature, art and politics at the small Isle of Wight resort of Freshwater and at Farringford itself, residence of Lord Tennyson. Numbering amongst "the immortals" as she described them, was the celebrated portrait photographer Julia Margaret Cameron, the artist George Watts and Charles Tennyson-Turner.[22] Hopkins later recollected a time when she roamed the Farringford grounds at will "by Lord Tennyson's permission" and spent the majority of her leisure-time "with Arthur Tennyson under a beautiful lime; occasionally diving like swallows into the nest-like old house, half hidden in ivy and trees, in order to fetch out of the library some book that we wanted".[23]

Hopkins manifested an early poetic and literary talent, no doubt galvanized by such companionship. She completed two works of fiction prior to embarking on her nationwide purity campaign - *Fred Williams* (1866) a story for boys, and *Rose Turquand* (1876) a two-volume novel for girls, both of which received encouraging reviews.[24] *English Idylls*, the first of her two volumes of poetry, depicted her great love of nature in a series of "simple studies of English scenes",[25] whereas her later verse bore the imprint of purity reform and the fight against evil to which she felt called. The

poems in *Autumn Swallows, a book of Lyrics,* (1883) purveyed a deep compassion for suffering humanity and were altogether more esoteric in style. George MacBeth has compared them to the "more dream-like poems"[26] of the metaphysical and devotional poet Henry Vaughan (1621-95), whose work Hopkins knew and admired. "Life in Death" taken from *Autumn Swallows,* offers a good example of the ethereal, mystical qualities normally associated with the metaphysical poets:

> I heard him in the autumn winds,
> I felt him in the cadent star,
> And in the shattered mirror of the wave,
> That still in death a rapture finds,
> I caught his image faint and far;
> And musing in the twilight on the grave,
> I heard his footsteps stealing by,
> Where the long churchyard grasses sigh.[27]

Much of her poetry consisted of themes of spiritual conflict and turmoil interpreted through a series of dualisms that were also characteristic of her later sexual theory - good and evil; pleasure and suffering; light and dark; faith and despair; life and death. Close friends and colleagues who commented on her "unusual mental powers"[28] and artistic ability, did so primarily in order to underscore the wasted talent and career that had been sacrificed for an alternative considerably less illustrious. Sociable and quick-witted on the one hand, Hopkins was intensely earnest and morally compassionate on the other, and it was this latter aspect of her personality that ultimately dictated the course of her life. In the following section her social activism which can be grouped into three broad phases will be outlined, and her various intellectual and emotional influences subsequent to that of her father will be examined.

3.2 SOCIAL AND MORAL REFORM: CAMBRIDGE, c.1856-66.

During the late 1850s, the growth of female involvement within parish life provided a

vital support network for local clergy and constituted a pool of inexpensive auxiliaries for the established Church.[29] Hopkins' early philanthropic efforts epitomized the mid-century expansion of voluntary women lay workers within the Church of England, devoting herself to Sunday school teaching, district-visiting, temperance work and mothers' meetings. From a series of bible-study classes for "respectable girls"[30] held in her family home, she learned of fathers and brothers who attended no place of worship and maintained no connection at all with organized religion. Concerned, as were the majority of the Anglican hierarchy at this time by the spiritual alienation of these working men, she selected Barnwell, "a populous and ill-reputed suburb of Cambridge",[31] as the focus of her evangelism. Her conviction as a young women, that the gospel message held a special significance for men, refuted dominant correlations of religion with the female, affective sphere and prefigured her most significant later purity work. "Only in so far as a man is in CHRIST and like CHRIST can he really be a man"[32] she observed. In *Work Amongst Working-Men* (1879), she recorded how with the support of her father and the parish priest, Barnwell became the centre of a remarkable religious revival. From a small bible-group of sixteen local navvies in a workman's cottage, then in the local school-rooms and finally in her own purpose-built mission hall and Working Men's Institute, in excess of 700 brick-layers, shoemakers, carpenters, well-sinkers and farm-labourers walked from miles around to hear her preach.[33] As a rather less conventional route into the public sphere than teaching children or poor mothers, Hopkins accordingly encountered a good deal of hostility:

> The old foolish tendency to stick to the letter of Scripture, and sin against its divine, progressive spirit, to bind women...[with] worn-out bondages and restrictions...was then in full force, and accordingly a perfect storm beat about my ears. [34]

Eventually, however, opposition gave way before "good works and practical results". Hopkins later noted somewhat wryly, that the leading Evangelical clergyman who had "begun by cutting me in the streets, ended up by presenting me with four volumes of his sermons in token of his esteem and sympathy with my work".[35]

3.2.i Brighton, 1866-78.

The death of William Hopkins in 1866 was to cut short Ellice's preaching success in Cambridge. She moved with her mother to Percy House in Brighton where in order to assuage her grief over her father, she quickly immersed herself in an alternative form of urban philanthropy - rescuing prostitutes. Rescue work aimed at keeping young girls out of prostitution by providing them with alternative training and employment, and established refuges in order to rehabilitate those who had already "fallen". Despite her initial repugnance, Hopkins felt a particular claim upon her as a woman to devote herself to this aspect of moral reform.[36] Rescue work was to dramatically alter the future trend and interests of her life. She became a frequent visitor to the Albion Hill Home run by Fanny Vicars, a converted Jewish woman, and in 1870 Hopkins wrote two booklets to help raise fund for the venture. *Work Among the Lost* was a "thrilling account"[37] of Mrs Vicars' pioneering work with prostitutes and the potential dangers confronting women who wished to engage in this type of charitable activity. *Work in Brighton; or, Woman's Mission to Women* prefaced by Florence Nightingale, became a highly successful manual for rescue workers, demonstrating the long-term impact of the Albion Hill Home upon Hopkins' own methods of magdalenism.[38]

The years 1866 to 1876, whilst fraught with problems of ill health and depression, were significant for Hopkins in terms of influential new friendships and the development of her sexual and moral theory. In 1870, Lady Caroline Stirling introduced her to the temperance advocate Sarah Robinson, hoping that shared interests and good

companionship might alleviate Hopkins' current fretful and invalided state.[39] The two women formed a close spiritual partnership, praying regularly together. Robinson was already nationally celebrated for her work at Aldershot military post, promoting teetotallism amongst the troops by outfitting and running a mobile coffee canteen.[40] She interested Hopkins in a new scheme at Portsmouth, the national point of embarkation for troops, where she hoped to provide "a decent place of resort" [41] for soldiers and their families. The resulting pamphlet *Active Service* (1872), raised a substantial amount of the necessary funds and in 1874 the Portsmouth Soldier's Institute was duly opened, with Hopkins as a senior trustee.

3.2.i.a Female friendships.

The significance of intimate, long-term attachments between Victorian women, particularly those in positions of public prominence, has been well documented by women historians.[42] In the sex-segregated society of nineteenth-century Britain with its discrete female and male spheres and formalized marital relations, women were far more likely to rely on other women for emotional support. Hopkins' personal world displayed many of the features outlined in Smith-Rosenberg's depiction of a rich, autonomous female culture and its intricate networks of sororial encouragement and sustenance.[43] In her role as informal spiritual advisor, she inspired loyalty and appreciation from her contemporaries, fostering close, same-sex friendships with relatives, companions and co-workers who shared her moral concerns or were involved in similar types of reform. Both intensely affectionate, and dependent on reciprocal expression of that affection, she remained deeply loyal to Sarah Robinson, her two sisters Kate and Augusta, Emily Janes - her "beloved" campaign secretary between 1883 and 1888, and Mrs McIsaac, her companion and helper throughout the last sixteen years of her life. [44]

Her most passionate lifelong friendship was with Annie Ridley, to whom she was

devoted. According to Barrett, Ridley, having read an account of the Cambridge mission in the American author Elihu Buritt's *Seed Lives* (n.d.), had sent a sizeable donation to the Barnwell mission hall resulting in a lengthy correspondence between the two women. They eventually met several years later at Brighton College.[45] Under Hopkins' influence Ridley was introduced to the Albion Hill Home and roused to rescue work herself. They visited each other's family homes regularly and spent many idyllic summers together exploring the Alps, the towns along the Rhine and the art treasures of Rome and Florence.[46] Ridley's reminiscences of these European travels offer us a rare glimpse of Hopkins relaxed, and entirely at ease with herself:

> I recall sadly the old days of Freshwater and Sark, when we were so perfectly happy through the long summer hours, she [Hopkins] writing and then reading to me her new poems, varied by...talk and criticism....And our picnics out on the rocks...as full of simple pleasure as if we had still been two schoolgirls, and as if for her there was no past or future saddened by the weight of the world's heaviest woe.[47]

Whether married or single, the depth and richness of same-sex friendships proved a vital support mechanism and emotional outlet for women. They offered comfort to the spinster confronted with increasing social antagonism, and the new wife, who by virtue of the physical and emotional detachment maintained in the respectable family household, often found herself living with a virtual stranger.[48] Nurturing female ties counterbalanced what Lillian Faderman has described as "the shield of passionlessness that a woman was trained to raise before a man",[49] whilst simultaneously protecting the ethic of female sexual purity. These friendships were not merely tolerated in nineteenth-century society, but considered a mark of genteel upbringing. Such was the ideological dominance of constructions of womanhood as passive and asexual that passionate declarations of love

between women, often equivalent in intensity to heterosexual expressions of desire, attracted little adverse criticism. Hopkins frequently acknowledged Ridley as inspirational to her work. With a copy of her newly completed *The Power of Womanhood; or, Mothers and Sons. A Book for Parents* (1899), she wrote to her effusively:

> You will understand the cryptic words - 'In Remembrance' - which I have written in your book. But for you the work would not have been done, the book would never have been written. Never was more far-reaching friendship than yours and mine. It has gone down to hell, it has ascended to heaven; its feet have been beautiful on the mountains, publishing good tidings of all things lovely and pure.[50]

On another occasion, when illness had kept her apart from Ridley for some time, she declared, "To touch your hand and kiss you would be like long years of pain and sorrow effaced and all things made new".[51] To explain away such language as typical of the facile sentimentality of a bygone age both distorts and trivializes the intensity and durability of such relationships and their significance to the women involved. The benefits of a psychosexual analysis of these friendships remains a contested point and in the case of Hopkins and Ridley, where so little source material exists, is especially problematic.[52] Whether out of necessity or choice, however, it is clear that single women in strengthening their friendships with each other, "minimised their heterosexuality".[53] As Martha Vicinus has observed, "As long as close relationships with men were socially difficult, women had much to gain by keeping their distance and strengthening their connections with each other".[54]

3.2.i.b James Hinton.

One man who did exert an influence over Hopkins was the leading London aural surgeon and sexual radical James Hinton, whom she met in 1872. The son of a Baptist

minister, Hinton had been solicited as a young boy by two Whitechapel prostitutes, the horror of which, according to his biographer Mrs Havelock Ellis, had never left him.[55] An overwhelming desire to "find a remedy for prostitution"[56] led him to Brighton where he and Ridley entreated Hopkins, by now an established rescue worker, to expand her moral reform efforts onto a nationwide scale. Describing the scenes in the Haymarket and Piccadilly, Hinton's profound distress was persuasive to Hopkins:

> ...speaking of all he had seen and heard, his voice suddenly broke and he buried his face and wept like a child. That one man could suffer as he did over the degradation of this womanhood of ours has always been to me the most hopeful thing I know.[57]

Despite his compassion for the topic, however, Hinton's rationale for the elimination of prostitution was driven by a very different impulse from that of Hopkins' reforming religious enthusiasm. A sexual libertarian, he enshrined physical passion as "the great spiritual power of human life",[58] and argued for the recognition of male and female sexual activity as the superlative expression of bodily and spiritual satisfaction. Prostitution made a mockery of this inspirational experience, reducing passionate love to a functional carnal gratification and encouraging the prudery as opposed to the virtue of married women. Only by eliminating prostitution he protested, could the sexual infantilism of respectable wives be rehabilitated and the beauty of marital passion developed to its utmost potential.[59]

An advocate of free love and polygamous relations, Hinton proved an unlikely influence upon the moral austerity of Hopkins' sexual ethics although, as I will demonstrate in Chapter 7, her own construction of marital relations belies simplistic accusations of sexual prurience. Yet in a complex juxtaposition of moral codes, Hinton's discourse reinforced Hopkins' own assessment of the interrelatedness between the prostitute and

the respectable married woman, in which the sexual purity of the latter was predicated upon male access to the former. "Domestic virtue which rests in any sense on prostitution is condoning hell in our houses [and] death in our streets"[60] he declared. Bristow has rightly described Hinton's language as "just obscure and ambiguous enough to make it possible for Ellice to ignore the radical implications of his work".[61] The desire to rehabilitate female sexuality translated easily into a compassionate earnestness for the redemption of women. His reputation as "a seducer of women as well as their saviour and interpreter"[62] probably accounted for Hopkins' selective compilation and editing of his letters in her *Life and Letters of James Hinton* (1878), in which she successfully avoided mention of either his sexual promiscuity or his more eccentric philosophical ideals.

Her respect for Hinton's medical scientific knowledge and the obvious parallels between this and the memory of her father, undoubtedly swayed her in deciding to honour his plea and extend her rescue efforts further afield. "For ten years...after my friend's death" she wrote, "I gave up everything...and beat wearily up and down the three kingdoms, holding meetings, organising practical work [and] agitating for the greater legal protection of the young".[63] The undue emphasis ascribed to his influence in subsequent accounts, however, has neglected the contribution of other, more longstanding figures in Hopkins' personal and professional life such as Robinson, Ridley and Bishop Wilkinson (whose role will be discussed later). To describe her entire purity campaign as Rosa Barrett does, as "a memorial to James Hinton"[64] not only over-romanticizes this particular relationship, but underestimates the very real extent of Hopkins' own motivation and commitment to social purity.

3.2.ii Campaigning for purity, 1878-88.

Hopkins' success as a religio-political mobilizer was unquestionable. From 1878

onwards, she undertook a gruelling, decade-long tour of major British towns, raising ecclesiastical and public awareness of the need for a more stringent, single standard of sexual morality and campaigning for legislative change towards that end. She recruited thousands of middle-class churchwomen into her own rescue organisation, the Ladies Association for the Care of Friendless Girls (LACFG), founded scores of training homes and industrial schools for working-class girls, and promoted her scheme for purity through a wide range of devotional and didactic literature. Although endowed with a small allowance after her father's death, her political reform achievements were a testimony to the money earned from her writing skills. The financial generosity of patrons such as the Northern industrialist Frank Crossley and his wife provided her with the secretarial assistance of Emily Janes, who took on the administrative burden of parliamentary work and legal petitioning.[65] The costs of travelling and circulation of appeals, however, were borne largely by the huge sales of Hopkins' booklets on social purity.

Halfway through her tour in 1883, she was invited by Bishop Lightfoot of Durham to address a meeting of working-men with a view to establishing a nondenominational, male purity league. The resulting White Cross Army (WCA) was to prove the mainstay of the last twenty years of her life, gaining her an international reputation as a moral educationalist. In Part 3 of this thesis I will outline her campaigning procedures in fuller detail and the discursive constructions of femininity and masculinity attendant upon the organisational outlets of the LACFG and the WCA.

In 1863, in her *Essays on the Pursuit of the Churches,* Frances Power Cobbe wrote, "Whatever else may be doubtful...it is pretty well conceded that she [woman] is in her right place teaching the young, reclaiming the sinful, relieving the poor, and nursing the sick".[66] Cobbe's appraisal of female philanthropic servility was somewhat caustic. Yet

Hopkins' moral activism surpassed standard re-statements of localized, voluntarist benevolence as woman's "natural sphere" by entering the political and legal domain on a national scale and preaching on a highly unsuitable topic for a reputable young woman. In this instance, the conventional ideological alliances of femininity and religion combined with her own sexual status were to prove a radical motivating force, as the following discussion will illustrate.

3.3 HIGH ANGLICANISM AND SPINSTERHOOD.

Hopkins remained a devout High Church spinster throughout her life. To what extent her single status was the result of circumstance rather than choice is a matter for speculation. Unlike her contemporaries Constance Maynard or Florence Nightingale, I have found no indication in the primary source material that she was ever troubled by lovelorn suitors. Rather, she appeared to acknowledge celibacy as part of her vocational calling and, as I will show, reinterpreted her spinsterhood as a powerful metaphor of sexual purity.[67]

Mid-Victorian society held little in the way of fulfilling options for the demographic "surplus" of unmarried women indicated by the 1861 census.[68] Deprived of the roles of wife and mother, single women were expected to remain in an ancillary domestic function, fulfilling familial duties by caring for ageing relatives or engaging in limited charitable activity. Such was the cultural significance of marriage and motherhood for women that despite literary attempts such as Charlotte Yonge's *The Daisy Chain* (1856) to depict this largely invisible existence in a sentimental, appealing manner, the Victorian spinster was stigmatized as "superfluous", "redundant" or "odd" and faced a desperate fate of social marginality and idleness.[69] Nineteenth-century feminists used the statistics of spinsterhood to promote the expansion of women's opportunities in education and

public life. They argued that unsupported by husbands and left precariously dependent upon limited family finances, single women had need to find ways of supporting themselves. By the end of the century, unmarried women had emerged as the earliest beneficiaries of new forms of female employment and suffrage, with a collective self-awareness that viewed freedom from marriage as an altogether more desirable existence.[70] Feminists like Cobbe gloried in their independence from emotional or personal restraint, successfully translating the passive, spinsterly role into one of autonomous, public service.

Active spiritual leadership such as that undertaken by Hopkins provided an equally successful re-working of the negative connotations of redundancy. Defending her own celibate status and the value of the single life, she declared that "women should be free to serve God, whether in the married state or the unmarried state in quietness and godly living".[71] Whilst she did not perceive celibacy as superior to the married state, holding a very high doctrine of marriage as shall be seen in Chapter 7, she recognised the utility of spinsterhood as an empowering and fulfilling precondition of her own career. Marriage, as the exclusive source of women's happiness and purpose was accordingly dismissed as an "old fallacy".[72]

In terms of the respect and encouragement afforded by late nineteenth-century High Anglicanism for female celibacy through its restoration of sisterhoods and segregation of the sexes for worship, it is perhaps no coincidence that Hopkins was a faithful High Churchwoman. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the feminist propensities of Anglo-Catholicism with its proportionately high representation of "culturally subordinate groups" and "affront to Victorian family values" have been well documented.[73] Hopkins would not have been unaware of the possibilities provided by the conventual life for single women. Although she never entered a sisterhood and was to write with acerbity

about their penitentiary methods, she did liaise with and helped to supervise the running of many convent-led rescue homes. Indeed, as Chapter 4 will illustrate, despite the pro-worldly engagement of her purity campaigns, there are definite continuities of theme between the separatist and organizational autonomy of the convent and the female subculture of the purity movement.

3.3.i Divine immanence and transcendence.

Because of the insufficient treatment of many key issues and doctrines, it has not been possible to assess Hopkins' faith in any systematic or comprehensive sense. I have gleaned many of her perspectives on religion from fragments of personal letters and correspondence in which she sought to advise friends or family who were undergoing various spiritual crises. The following discussions do not comprise an exhaustive account therefore, but rather present some of her major devotional themes as presented in Barrett's *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* and a wide range of other purity texts.

Hopkins' spiritual reflections were characterized primarily by the incarnational theology and appeal to divine mystery that dominated liberal High Anglicanism during the latter decades of the nineteenth-century and produced such celebrated studies as *Lux Mundi* (1889). Incarnational religion, "associated alike with the Tractarian teaching and with Coleridge, Maurice and the Cambridge theologians"[74] was, as Bernard Reardon has noted, the "settled trend" of Victorian theology. It sought to explore the ramifications of Christ's assumption of human nature, not least of which was a reconciliation of the transcendent majesty of God as "totally other" with a profound awareness of divine immanence. Scientific advance accorded well with the doctrine of the incarnation, evidencing the divine Logos who had entered and ordered the universe. Hopkins' interpretation of Christianity was permeated throughout with a deep sense of the presence of the numinous in both humanity and nature.[75] Like her father, she appropriated the

evolutionary paradigm as illustrative of the omnipotence and omnipresence of God, enhancing rather than contradicting, the wonders of divine creation. Following the romanticist spirit of Coleridge as opposed to the rationalism and mechanistic philosophy of the Paleyan apologetic, her immanentizing of religious reality, in which God was no longer the "occasional celestial visitor"[76] but everywhere and in all things present, displayed itself in a style most closely approximating Wordsworthian nature-mysticism. Any pantheistic tendencies were tempered by an insistence on the transcendent mystery of God:

> I am so enjoying my walks...in the beautiful uncovered way of Gods fair world, and with His blue sky closing me in with a sense of infinite protection; and my trees! my trees! great fountains of life, the elms with their exquisite russet blossom full upon them.[77]

Themes of solitary contemplation, the stillness of nature amongst the unceasing struggle and conflict of worldly aspirations and the convergence of the finite with the infinite proliferate throughout her poetry and moral literature. "Truly" she wrote from Brighton in 1901, "There is absolution in the sea, all one's worries die and melt away into its infinite azure, and something of the eternal calm comes over one - an *absolvo te* breathed softly by its waves".[78]

Her love of mystery and sense of the numinous did not coincide with a world-denying stance for, as Ian Ramsey has observed, late-Victorian incarnational theology "enabled a genuine contact between supernatural religion and contemporary culture".[79] As the supreme manifestation of the supernatural activity of God in relation to the world, the incarnation sacralized or made holy all secular life, endowing the natural order with transcendent meaning. Natural and supernatural phenomena stood in a dialectical relation to each other as "the two ends of an unbroken continuum".[80] For Hopkins, the concept

of divine immanence broke down artificial distinctions between the sacred and the secular, sanctifying all material life and precipitating the establishment of God's kingdom on earth. She did not regard the secular world as an enemy therefore, but as an ally and a mission-field. It is necessary to differentiate here between her extreme disavowal of the worldly values of hedonism and complacency, and her anticipation of social and sexual justice in the present as opposed to the hereafter. To this end, she interpreted the significance of the incarnation for humanity through contemporary moral issues and paradigms, considering that the establishment of God's kingdom on earth would only be facilitated by the moral purification of society. Consequently, she lambasted the anti-worldly stance associated with Anglican Evangelicalism whose introspective quest for individual salvation and "morbid fear of personal sin" [81] she regarded as prurient, self-centered egotism. "Once for all [sic] we must get rid of this sky-high Christianity of ours, with its head in the clouds..and come down to them and stand by their side, and enter into their difficulties"[82] she wrote to her co-rescue workers.

3.3.ii Revelation, doubt and truth.

Hopkins' ability to discern spiritual significance in the everyday world negated materialistic and rigid interpretations of the miraculous as mere "evidential portents"[83] of God's existence. Rather, miracles were the natural and obvious manifestations of the divine presence, the irruption of the supernatural into the ordinary or natural human sphere. To a friend struggling to reconcile biblical miracles as intellectually credible she wrote:

> ...why confine the supernatural to the "peeping and muttering" of our modern wizards? Does it not lie about your path and about your bed? What is the human will but supernatural...when you kneel down and pray do you not enter into a supernatural state? speaking to That which is neither seen, nor thought, nor known....Is not the body of the man you meet in the street the Shekinah of the Divinity...self-conscious of something

> that dwells within him?...Once firmly recognize the supernatural in man, and the supernatural in the Bible offers no difficulty...it is the danger of confining the supernatural to the vulgar signs and wonders of Spiritualism that so revolts one against the system.[84]

Although her emphasis upon the mystery of the incarnation declared God as beyond ordinary human understanding, Hopkins was not unsympathetic to the intellectual difficulties of comprehending divine revelation. In a tone reflective of the general crisis of faith which beset the educated classes during the latter half of the nineteenth-century, she acknowledged doubt as "one of the gravest trials of life".[85] Her qualified appreciation of *Aids to Reflection* (1825) which she described as "a deal of fine confused feeding",[86] belied her indebtedness to Coleridgean thought. She concluded her meditations on doubt for example, by observing that "as mere intellectual belief does not save, there may be much intellectual doubt and difficulty that does not destroy".[87] Like Coleridge, she dismissed the premises of eighteenth-century evidence theology as fundamentally flawed. The veracity of faith lay in meaningful, lived experience, not academic argument. Christianity was no mere speculative system, but "life rightly seen and rightly ordered",[88] a practical faith in which the service of humanity was the "noblest of all ends".[89] Without reducing religion solely to its ethical precepts, Hopkins' enshrinement of morality and the development of moral consciousness as the touchstone of authentic faith, was self-confessedly Kantian.[90] Religious truth then was discernible not by disinterested philosophizing, but by deep commitment to spiritual and moral principles. At the heart of the Christian faith lay a moral ideal to which all must respond voluntarily and as convicted by revelation. To this end, she remonstrated with her friend and patron, Frank Crossley, on his tendency to rely upon formulaic propositions that reduced the mysteries of faith to a series of human ordinances. Paraphrasing Coleridge, she declared:

> Christianity is a spirit and a life, and not a religion of maxims...our Lord purposely gave us some of His commands in such hyperbolical forms, in order that we might recognize that His is a religion of spirit and life which cannot be bound down...to rules, which the changing conditions of life must constantly falsify.[91]

3.3.iii Tradition and doctrine.

Hopkins' experientialist reading of faith manifested itself in terms of a surprising level of doctrinal heterodoxy. Despite her High Church background, she was no lover of ecclesiastical liturgy or ceremonial and maintained a disinterested silence on the anti-ritualist controversies that fractured the Church in the 1870s and 1880s.[92] Unlike the elevated ecclesiology of Tractarians and later Anglo-Catholics, she held a comparatively low doctrine of the church, regarding all institutional religion as a very human affair. To a friend, undecided as to which denomination to attend, she answered bluntly, "if you are waiting to find an ideal church, with which you can on all points agree, I cannot pretend that you will find such in the Church of England, or in any other church that I know".[93]

Apart from the sacrament of communion which she held in high esteem, all prayers, hymns and credal dogma were viewed as transitory, "matter-moulded" phenomena. Creeds functioned as "large type" to "dim eyes",[94] conveying in imperfect form those truths which in the first passionate outbursts of spiritual life had no need of codification. Current Christian worship was thus compared unfavourably with that of the nascent church:

> I believe that the Protestant Church which departs furthest from the letter of the ordinances, is the one that more truly keeps its spirit....an age, miraculous, transitional, full of intense spiritual exaltation and daily expectation of the end of all things - may not be the best from which to draw the forms of an age fixed, established and by no means given to

exaltation.[95]

Hopkins' religious demeanour was one of dignity and disciplined sobriety and her use of the term "exaltation" in the above quotation is best translated in terms of earnestness of devotion rather than crude emotionalism. Her Puseyan reserve abhorred over-enthusiasm as an irreverent familiarity with the profound wonder and mystery of the divine. In a similar vein, she regarded the excessive mawkishness of images utilized by some of her purity co-workers as undermining the sacredness and worthiness of their cause. "I do not think it wrong to make appeals", she wrote to Dr. Barnardo in September 1881, "only I think they ought to be made with the calm force of faith, without hysterical shrieks and claptrap devices".[96]

Theologically well-versed, her range of devotional reading was impressive, combining patristic, medieval and modern influences. In her most contemplative work, *Christ the Consoler. A Book of Comfort for the Sick* (1879), she drew upon sources as varied as St. Augustine, Jeremy Taylor, St. Francis de Sales, Luther, the Puritan divine Richard Baxter, Pascal and the American Episcopalian preacher, Bishop Brooks. She was above all a biblicist, however, and would often recite her favourite gospel of St. John from beginning to end during spells of depression and illness.[97] Her embracing of scientific principles and suspicion of human compositions prohibited a literalist reading of scripture. "The spirit...is alone eternal" she wrote in terms reminiscent of the Broad Church approach to biblical criticism, "and the form which embodies it is necessarily fleeting...it bears the same relation to the truth as the type in printing bears to the thought it conveys".[98] The revelatory status of the bible lay in its sufficiency as a moral guide, and as witness to God's co-identification with human suffering through the incarnation:

> Nothing strikes me so much in a life of great sorrow and trial as the deep humanity of the Scriptures...only in the Divine Book do I find the

deep human cry, only in the Psalms of David, and in the Word made flesh do I find what suits my struggling humanity.[99]

3.3.iv Bishop George Wilkinson.

Hopkins received counsel and guidance for over twenty years from her friend and spiritual mentor, George Wilkinson (1833-1907), Primus of the Church of Scotland, and formerly Bishop of Truro. Her devotion to the bishop, whom she described as "an angel of my God",[100] did not go unnoticed. A. J. Mason, his curate in Truro and author of *Memoir of George Howard Wilkinson* (1910), commented that "the Bishop had few more ardent admirers than Miss Ellice Hopkins, whom some of her friends believed to be susceptible to his influence, and to his alone, among ecclesiastics".[101] Whilst an incumbent at St. Peter's, Eaton Square, Wilkinson, who had begun life as an Evangelical, came under the influence of T. T. Carter's writings and gained himself something of a reputation as a Puseyite. He appointed women vergers and founded a sisterhood, the Community of the Epiphany, to undertake missionary duties within the parish.[102] Like Hopkins he was no ritualist, although he became embroiled in the controversial publications over confession and absolution in the 1870s and 1880s, and played a heavily conciliatory role in the disputes over the regulation of public worship.[103] They had first met in the early 1880s when Hopkins was halfway through her campaign for the nationwide promotion of her Ladies Associations. According to Mason, the work of the Pimlico branch which was established in 1881 "went straight to Wilkinson's heart".[104] He later published a volume on the principles of magdalenism. More significantly for Hopkins' later work, Bishop Wilkinson established a parochial organisation in 1882 known as the Churchmen's Union, whose promotion of male sexual purity eventually comprised the main objectives of the WCA.[105]

3.3.v Catholic Evangelicalism and religious eclecticism.

In his *Evangelicalism and Modern Britain. A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (1989), David Bebbington has identified conversionism, activism, biblicism and crucicentrism as the four key themes of nineteenth-century evangelical thought.[106] Despite her High Church origins, Hopkins' call for personal moral righteousness and commitment to a life of service and philanthropic reform was illustrative of precisely those tendencies normally associated with Victorian evangelical Christianity. I have already noted her ardent biblicism. An emphasis upon conversion and the cross also played a large part in Hopkins' early Cambridge preaching. Hannah More's celebrated dictum that "Action is the life of virtue and the world the theatre of action"[107] could have found no truer disciple. Her stress on active works meant that for Hopkins the greatest sin of all was sloth. "I can as well believe in a lying Christian, a murdering Christian, a thieving Christian, as a do-nothing Christian",[108] she would often declare.

This coalition of High Church and evangelical sensibilities is not as surprising or unusual as it first appears. The failure of church historians to relate Anglo-Catholicism and Anglican Evangelicalism to each other, after the hostile encounters of the 1860s, has obscured many subsequent overlaps in theological emphases. Neither the incarnation nor the atonement were doctrinally exclusive of each other. As Bebbington remarks, "attention to the Cross could lead in diverse directions".[109] Kenneth Hylson-Smith has also observed in *High Churchmanship in the Church of England* (1993) that "both Anglo-Catholics and Evangelicals shared a seriousness about religious matters"[110] which united them against the common enemies of spiritual apathy and liberalism. What has been depicted by some scholars as "Catholicism Evangelicalism" [111] was at its height during the latter decades of the nineteenth-century. William Pickering has noted that "many Anglo-Catholic priests involved in mission work boasted happily of their Evangelical outlook".[112] In 1898 for example, the Rt. Hon. G. W. E. Russell lectured

to the English Church Union "with the intention of demonstrating that Catholic theology is at heart Evangelical and that Evangelical doctrine 'in so far as it is constructive and affirmative' is 'truly Catholic'".[113] To be sincerely religious meant to convert the world to Christian values. Whilst manifested in differing ways, notions of conversionism and mission were very much part of *both* movements.

Looking back on her Barnwell Mission, Hopkins later observed that she was a "mere inexperienced girl, with the love of her Saviour in her heart, and wishful of saving others".[114] A powerful conviction of worldly sin and the need for Christ's redemptive action meant that at the heart of her early incarnational theology lay the evangelical emphasis upon the atonement:

> Beneath the power of the cross of CHRIST I have seen four hundred rough, world-hardened, reckless men, weeping and sobbing like children over their sins...receiving the word of life and becoming completely changed men. [115]

Rather than preaching "ready-made doctrines" of redemption, however, she brought her working audience to the cross through an appeal to fundamental human morality. "My first effort" she recorded, "was to get them to believe...that there are great inevitable laws in the moral world as well as in the physical, and that what a man sows that will he also reap".[116] Salvation was not the evangelical concept of imputed righteousness therefore, but a form of Anglican gradualism which acknowledged the need for holiness and purity of life and a justification by works achieved through "unconscious devotion and self-sacrifice...for the public good". [117]

Although Hopkins' identified primarily with High Anglicanism, the attempt to locate her too firmly within any strict religious party is problematic. Commitment to practical

moral reform superseded any rigid denominational adherence. No faction was immune to her criticism in the name of purity and as I have indicated, she combined defining features of various discrete religious congregations within her own personal framework of faith. As something of a spiritual pragmatist, it could be argued that ultimately her fundamental religious creed was the moral purification of humanity and society.

3.4 PREACHING PURITY: HOPKINS AS ORATOR.

Hopkins' oratorical brilliance witnessed to by many, was a key factor in her successful recruitment of women and men into purity work. In his *Seed Lives,* Elihu Burritt, one of her earliest colleagues and fundraisers, gives a glowing account of her work in Cambridge. Recalling the heady success of the Barnwell mission meetings, he wrote:

> She was addressing five hundred labouring men, all raised by her instrumentality from the...depths of sin to... a better life. We have listened to the most eminent revivalist preachers in America, and to many of the most impressive ministers in this country; but we never heard an address more calculated to melt an audience, and we never saw an audience more deeply moved. In diction and argument it was powerful; but in fervour and pathos it was indescribable.[118]

Despite Burritt's comparison of Hopkins' preaching style with that of American revivalism, to what extent her powers of evangelism were heir to such origins given her High Church background is debatable. As John Kent has argued, the second awakening of 1859-62 "did no more than provoke a small number of local church revivals"[119] and Hopkins' initial compulsion to preach may just as easily have emerged from a more general concern over the spiritual disaffection of the local working classes. Having said this, her methods displayed several features outlined by Olive Anderson as typical of the mid-Victorian expansion of female revivalist preachers.[120] The broad profile of this

cadre of women, which included such celebrated figures as Catherine Booth, owed much to their predominantly middle-class backgrounds and values. Unlike earlier, sectarian forms of nineteenth-century female "ranting", they dressed with decorum and spoke by invitation only in town halls and assembly rooms or, like Hopkins, acquired their own mission halls. Rather than evoking mass religious fervour with spontaneous, spirit-led exhortations, these female preachers endeavoured to appeal to the intellect and judgment of their audiences with reasoned argument and well-formulated addresses.

Hopkins' personal oratorical style demonstrated many of these aspects. She was certainly an assiduous researcher of her preaching material. From private comments it is clear that she did not consider herself an inherently gifted orator. Success she argued, came only through constant prayer and thorough preparation:

> If anyone supposes that my power of speaking was a gift that came naturally to me, without any effort on my part, let them once for all dispossess themselves of any such idea. Gift, like genius, I often think, only means an infinite capacity for taking pains. [121]

Sensitive to the need to tailor her speeches and pamphlets to the interests of a largely working-class audience, she ransacked magazines, sermons and popular fiction. She scoured John Bunyan for imagery and Charles Spurgeon for dramatic technique in order to procure a discourse of sufficient appeal to a semi-literate audience.[122] Attempts to imitate the "vivid expressions"[123] of the less educated made her an object of some ridicule within respectable female circles. She defended her use of "good strong illustrations" with a polemical attack upon the banality of much popular devotional literature as mere "water gruel and brown sugar".[124] The absence of spiritual profundity in the reading matter of her condescending female peers she retaliated, rendered it as little

more than "sweet pap fit for children".[125]

In the charged moral climate of the 1880s, the unconventionality of a female speaker on a topic as radical as sexual purity appeared a particularly "delicate experiment".[126] Hopkins' earnest religious disposition and calm, precise delivery meant that she was unusually adept in the cultivation of sobriety and order at purity meetings. In his introduction to Barrett's *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* Henry Scott Holland recalled two incidents "of peculiar anxiety...when her spirit triumphantly dominated the menace of circumstance".[127] First, when she was invited by him as the first woman to address an all-male audience of Oxford undergraduates on the topic of purity and second, in St. James's Hall in late 1885, "in the thick of the excitement" [128] over William Stead's revelations of child prostitution and trafficking in women. "Nerves were high-strung" recalls Scott Holland, "There was a great risk lest the meeting should be carried off its feet in moral unsteadiness", but on each occasion:

> Her speech... seemed to me to be the one...that struck the right note. She brought down upon us a touch of penitence and fear. She made us aware of the dread responsibility incurred by coming together for such a cause. Everything became serious and deep under her words. It was exactly what was wanted.[129]

3.4.i. The advantages and disadvantages of gender.

The persuasiveness of Hopkins' discourse was due in no small measure to her female gender, although such an acknowledgment should not be allowed to undermine her very real skills of eloquence. Anderson has argued that the drawing power of mid-Victorian women preachers, who recruited audiences equivalent in number to that of many successful male counterparts, was inevitably based on public "curiosity and a desire to be shocked".[130] Effective use was made of the element of sensationalism, and dominant

ideals of femininity which accorded with the sentimentality of popular religious culture were overtly exploited. Anderson's comment that "a lady-like woman with 'a tender love for souls' [was] an almost irresistible mouthpiece for an appeal to the hearts of audiences composed of 'respectable working-men' or 'the better orders'",[131] mirrors directly Barrett's sentimental analysis of Hopkins' attraction:

> ...when the beautiful voice appealed to their manhood for protection, and to their strength...pleading with them as a feeble woman, and reminding them of their power, [it] awakened in them a longing for holiness and purity...ready at any cost to follow her lead, and join in the warfare against evil.[132]

Hopkins was not averse to the use of such gender-specific tactics in her promotion of purity. "You can make your womanhood a sort of external conscience to them", she wrote to her Christian lady co-workers in *Village Morality, a letter addressed to clergymen's wives and Christian workers* (1882), "you can appeal to them never to say or do things which they would be ashamed for you to know".[133] It would be inaccurate to depict the use of this moral device as a purely class-based phenomenon. As I will illustrate in Chapter 4, some of the most indomitable members of the Anglican clerical-elite were moved to tears by Hopkins pleading in tremulous, female tones for the moral and spiritual welfare of "fallen" women. Whilst on tour in the early 1880s, she likewise confronted and won over a particularly volatile audience of Edinburgh medical students. Once again her presence as a woman pleading on behalf of other women, allowed her a hearing previously denied to the male speakers present:

> ...man after eminent man was asked to give the address, but all with one consent began to make excuse. Spirit and flesh quailed before so difficult and rowdy an audience on so difficult and perilous a subject....The only thing was to push me at once to the front; and...I found myself face to face with an audience that evidently meant mischief. By

> some instinct I told them about James Hinton, whom...they knew by name...[and] how he had died of a broken heart...over the lost and degraded womanhood of England....This seemed to strike and sober them, that a man should actually die over a thing which to...many had been only the subject of a coarse jest. They listened to me with profound attention and I could see that my words went home.[134]

Claiming women's uniqueness *qua* women in expounding social purity was fraught with ambiguity, serving to underscore the "exceptional and transitional character of... proceedings",[135] rather than facilitating the development of a self-conscious, egalitarian justification for the female right to public speech. Hopkins viewed her own role as public orator in terms of "holding the fort"[136] until men themselves gained adequate realization of the significance of the moral vacuousness of the sexual double standard. "I have a great fear of setting the fashion of women speaking in public to men on this topic"[137] she confided to Frank Crossley. The extent to which this apparent conservatism failed to prevent the emergence of a radical, anti-establishment sub-text by Hopkins will be made evident in Chapter 4.

An appreciation of the level of animosity encountered by many "platform women"[138] during the late-Victorian period should also alert us as to why so many chose not to claim excessive authority independently of (clergy)men, but to accommodate their message carefully within the ideological parameters of femininity. Hopkins' Edinburgh experience of having to overturn an initially hostile reception was certainly not unique to her own career nor that of other rescue and vigilance workers. As late as 1898 the Bishop of Newcastle issued a complaint about the lack of public charity and suspicion towards those reformers who gave themselves "with untiring sacrifice"[139] to the care of outcast women. Hopkins was so reviled in certain quarters of polite Christian society that her very name "if anyone dared mention it in a drawing-room, was spoken in a whisper and heard with a shudder".[140] The Bishop of Lichfield's wife, to whom Hopkins had once

admitted reluctantly, "Nature made me a singing bird, but Grace has made me a sewer-rat!",[141] defended her from ecclesiastical opprobrium by comparing her endeavours "for the little girls of England" with Lord Shaftesbury's labours "for factory operatives and miners".[142]

As Elaine Showalter has explained, despite the level of feminist political activity by the 1880s, to "claim the pulpit or podium was in itself such a transgression of 'womanly' modesty that the most ladylike...campaigners seemed decidedly out of place".[143] Hopkins' status as spinster would have further exacerbated the derisory public concept of the "mannish woman orator".[144] According to Judith Walkowitz the choice of Josephine Butler as principal spokeswoman for the repeal campaign was based on the general consensus that "married status...enhanced a woman's eligibility to speak out for fallen women".[145] A woman who had not married could not assume the requisite maternal approach to the issue. Whereas the "personal independence of single women helped them gain national prominence in the first place"[146] therefore, the anomalous situation of a celibate woman expounding on issues of marriage and sexuality was bound to prompt an adverse response. The prevalence of popular prejudice against spinsters in conjunction with a life of public oratory proved a momentous personal and emotional hurdle for Hopkins to overcome. As will be seen in the next section, there was a considerable price to pay for living a purposeful life.

3.5 HEALTH AND PURITY.

The only photograph in existence of Hopkins, the frontispiece to Barrett's *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir* depicts a timid-looking woman of slight build, carefully supporting a palsied right hand and rather confirming Scott Holland's observation that "There was nothing compelling or commanding in her at first sight".[147] Always sickly as a child,

Hopkins suffered from poor health throughout her life, exacerbated by personality traits that were unsuitable in equipping her to withstand the fierce public scorn and misunderstanding her work could provoke. Described by one of her co-workers as "fastidious, weak, nervous and highly-strung",[148] the death of her father in 1866 precipitated a serious mental and physical breakdown in her health. Aged 33, she was already spending long periods "being carted about in a bath-chair"[149] through Brighton. In order to prepare herself for her decade-long national purity tour, she spent the previous two or three years convalescing. Even so, the constant travelling, correspondence and public speaking still made huge physical demands upon her.

Hopkins' general symptoms were those of the archetypal neurasthenic, a form of nervous stress which included headaches, neuralgia, insomnia, sciatica and chronic depression. According to Showalter, neurasthenia was regarded by the late-Victorian medical profession as "a more prestigious and attractive form of female nervousness than hysteria"[150] affecting women of considerable social and intellectual standing. In 1875 for example, Dr. S. Weir Mitchell described the typical neurasthenic as "of good position in society...just the kind of women one likes to meet with - sensible not over sensitive or emotional, exhibiting a proper amount of illness...and a willingness to perform their share of work quietly and to the best of their ability".[151] W. S. Playfair, professor of obstetric medicine at King's College was similarly sympathetic towards the refined female neurasthenic "who heartily longed for good health".[152]

Hopkins' quest for a more robust constitution was unceasing. During the 1880s, her purity work became interspersed increasingly regularly with lengthy periods of rest and confinement. Eventually directed by her physician Sir Andrew Clarke to retire completely from all public engagements, she lived an "invalid life" after 1888, focusing

primarily on the production of a steady output of purity literature. Her endeavours to continue publishing were handicapped by "a rheumatic or gouty affliction in her arms",[153] diagnosed by Clarke as "over-strain of the nerve-centres of the brain from excessive writing".[154] Illegible handwriting led her to resort to a typewriter, which she hated, but which granted her work a short reprieve.[155] A muscular sclerosis, manifesting itself in "powerlessness over the muscles of her arm and hand",[156] further problematized her literary ambitions. Her final two books, *The Power of Womanhood* and *The Story of Life. For the Use of Mothers and Boys* (1902) which were amongst her most significant works, were both composed in short, rapid bursts of good health, written either with her left hand or by dictation.

For many Victorian women, physical debilitation was a natural corollary of the boredom and confinement of an affluent lifestyle. With medical literature on female health burgeoning and the establishment of health spas and convalescent resorts throughout the country, sickness filled the inactivity gap for women and became a fashionable statement of respectable femininity.[157] Popular literature reflected a late-Victorian compulsion with paleness and lassitude, depicting female illness in terms of a romantic pathos. What Lorna Duffin and others have described as the "cult of female invalidism"[158] pervaded upper middle-class women's culture, bolstered and legitimated by the financial interests of the medical profession. Most ominously, the cult led to the proposition of scientific theories that validated women's inferior, subordinate status. The pathologization of female physiology, illustrated by the prevalent use of Weir Mitchell's notorious "rest-cure", created a powerful elision of women and sickness. Women were naturally sickly and sickness was therefore peculiarly feminine.[159]

Medical consensus asserted that women who exceeded their prescribed domestic boundaries were almost certain to develop some form of illness through the diversion of

vital energy away from the primacy of the female reproductive organs.[160] All manner of physical and mental disorders were consequently attributed to women's attempts to enter higher education or political life. Hopkins argued precisely the opposite. It was *lack* of a meaningful purpose outside of domesticity that induced female illness, depression or even madness. Her relationship with her personal physician portrays a definite tension between a stereotypical female dependency upon the elevated status of the Victorian medical specialist and an embittered frustration at her total disempowerment as a purity campaigner for the final fifteen years of her life. "I have a...despairing feeling that [my books] will never get known, as...I have so completely dropped out of the working world", [161] she wrote to a friend in 1889.

In her "Neurasthenia and its Relations to Diseases of Women" (1886), Dr. Margaret Cleaves argued for the close association of neurasthenia with women's traumatic transition from the private to the public domain. Cleaves explained that the intellectual and emotional turmoil accompanying frustrated female social ambitions which "could not be accommodated within the structures of late nineteenth-century society"[162] was a direct cause of neurasthenic invalidism. The American feminist Charlotte Perkins Gilman's disturbing tale of *The Yellow Wallpaper* (1892), became a classic account of this predicament, as did Florence Nightingale's *Cassandra* (1860).[163] According to Nightingale, women confined within the most benevolent home circumstances were comparable to the lunatic in the asylum. Showalter has pointed out that Nightingale "suffered from years of agonizing mental depression in which she experienced dreamlike trances, religious hallucinations, and moments of suicidal despair"[164] before finally breaking away from her domestic environment into nursing.

Hopkins was possessed of an equally "insane desire to be useful".[165] Insufficient source material for her earlier years means that unlike Nightingale, we will never know the

extent to which she may have reflected on her own familial position and the tensions between her single status, personal ambition and social expectations. Nevertheless, concealed within the traditional Christian rhetoric of self-sacrifice and service was a uncompromising statement of the desire for independence, work and power. Her emphasis upon activism led to a morbid fear of passivity and the inability to continue her moral reform work. Immobility proved the bitterest of trials, and her contemplation of suicide soon after she had retired from her campaigning was rejected only on the grounds of its being an innately self-centred act:

> I was in such wild mental suffering that I was not in the least sure of myself, and I might have flung myself into the sea, though I think the sense of the cruel selfishness of suicide would...have saved me in the last resort.[166]

Although frustrated purity aspirations constituted a major catalyst for Hopkins' mental ill-health, her many years of active reform were no less stressful. A highly visible public profile caused endless nervous ailments and bouts of exhaustion. In this sense the dominant medical scientific axiom concerning the irreconcilability of women and political endeavour was right. It was not through the trangression of her "natural" role that Hopkins suffered, however, but as a result of the condemnation of those who adhered to such ideological constraints of gender. Nervous reaction to public censure of her "rebellious activity" [167] was worsened by her own internalized struggle to stand against conventional norms of feminine behaviour, hence her defensive protestations that she had not come to "help men, but to ask them to help me in a battle that I found too hard".[168]

Psychosomatic forms of illness were a common trend for female orators or reformers who, in seeking to escape the passivity, infantilism and dependency inherent within the socio-cultural fostering of weak and sickly female egos, laboured under the oppositional

pressure of their own convictions and of family, or social propriety.[169] Hopkins lacked the immediate beauty and charisma of a Josephine Butler or a Christabel Pankhurst. Instead she utilized not only her femininity, but her physical frailness and diminutive size as effective discursive tools with which to reinforce the message of purity. As Scott Holland commented, "Her language was always effective and finely chosen; but, at times, she would rise to passages which entranced. Then, at such moments, the weakness of her physical frame added power, by contrast to the emotional tension".[170] Good use was made of her invalidism as a motif with which to deflect criticisms of unfeminine or "mannish" behaviour. As Barrett explained, "her very fragility...was in itself an appeal to her audiences. Instead of a coarse, ranting orator...here was a tiny, frail woman, standing up against all odds".[171] Her illness, in addition to her celibate status, functioned as a powerful symbol of female fragility and chastity, a tangible, visible augmentation of her moral discourse. As Chapter 8 will illustrate, considerations of suffering and martyrdom influenced Hopkins' theological discourse profoundly. In the following chapter I explore the contextual origins of social purity within the broader setting of late-Victorian ecclesiastical reform and assess the extent of the doctrinal challenge presented by Hopkins' definition of purity as well as her crucial role in converting the Anglican hierarchy to this cause.

CHAPTER 4:

SOCIAL PURITY AND THE RESPONSE OF THE CHURCHES

4.1 THE CHURCHES' RENEWED CONCERN OVER THE POOR.

Late-Victorian Britain was a period of immense social instability, with the underlying sense of unrest often associated with the waning of a century fuelled by a very real deterioration in material conditions. As Gareth Stedman Jones has shown, deep-seated fears of working-class rebellion were fostered by the evidences of unemployment such as trade unionism and strikes, and a highly visible level of extreme poverty.[1] The anxiety of the educated ruling classes over the urban poor sprang from religious concerns as well as socio-economic ones. Whilst the extent to which the hardships of urban life crystallized an effectively irreligious popular culture is by no means clear-cut, the attempted reconciliation of the disaffected working-classes by organized religion remains a commonplace in standard histories of the late nineteenth-century church.[2] Whether attributed to the posthumous influence of Maurician theology upon enlightened liberal Anglo-Catholics as in Peter d'A. Jones' account of the *Christian Socialist Revival, 1877-1914* (1968), or to David Bebbington's notion of a broader, more intellectualized "Nonconformist conscience" as the chapels emerged from sectarianism to mainstream political life, there is no doubt that a new religio-social awareness had transpired, with a deeper sense of the misery and a heightened sense of the responsibility towards the material and spiritual impoverishment of the less privileged.[3]

The anti-vice agitation of the social purity movement provides a relatively unexplored but significant feature of this renewed ecclesiastical impetus for social concern. An array of pioneering sociological surveys were carried out in the 1880s, most notably *The Bitter Cry of Outcast London* compiled in 1883 by Andrew Mearns, secretary of the London Congregational Union. A vivid portrayal of abject poverty, *The Bitter Cry* made explicit connections between the "absolute godlessness" and absence of the "lowest classes of

the community from our churches and chapels",[4] and their destitute living conditions. An equally shocking discovery that provoked widespread alarm in church circles was the "vast mass of moral corruption"[5] revealed at the centre of the nation's capital. Sexual immorality was ubiquitous among poorer families. "Incest is common" reported Mearns, "and no form of vice and sensuality causes surprise or attracts attention".[6]

As Frank Mort has pointed out, the regulation of working-class morality proved a "key component"[7] of reform programmes throughout the century. Frequent references by moral environmentalists to the impact of overcrowding, bad housing and inadequate sanitation upon the sexual habits of the poor designated immorality as "both as a product of material squalor and a causal factor in the decline of the urban environment".[8] Sanitary reformers such as the physician James Kay and the evangelical reformer Lord Ashley constructed their social analyses in a series of class-based cultural dualisms whereby discourses of licentiousness, filth, disease, criminality, sedition and atheism were contrasted over and against virtue, purity, health and civilized Christian behaviour.[9] Incest proved the "most common source of moral anxiety"[10] in terms of its fundamental threat to middle-class norms of respectable family life. In 1842 the canon of Durham, Dr. Gilly, giving evidence to the Poor Law Commissioners' *Report into the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population of Great Britain* castigated the "herding together"[11] of civilized beings without attention to sex or age. This was a denunciation repeated at regular intervals throughout the succeeding decades. As Bebbington has indicated, by the early 1880s the stage was set for a fresh moral offensive, with the suspension of the CD Acts leaving many elated religious reformers "in a volatile state, prepared to make new departures in public affairs in order to improve the nation's moral tone".[12]

4.2 THE ORIGINS OF SOCIAL PURITY.

The formal launching of the social purity movement is generally attributed to W. T.

Stead's "Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon", a series of sensationalist accounts of juvenile prostitution published throughout July of 1885.[13] Described by Judith Walkowitz as "one of the most successful pieces of scandal journalism of the nineteenth century",[14] much has been written on the social impact of Stead's lurid revelations of the entrapment and seduction of innocent young virgins by members of the vicious aristocracy.[15] Accused by his contemporaries of popularizing the very discourses of moral obscenity he purportedly wished to repress, these melodramatic narratives of sexual danger which often bordered on the pornographic, were largely exaggerated hyperbole.[16] Whatever their reliability as a social commentary, the articles gave huge impetus to existing anti-vice work such as that undertaken by Hopkins. Rallies were stimulated up and down the country, culminating in a mass demonstration in Hyde Park on August 22nd, 1885. This well-organized publicity stunt was set up in order to press for the immediate passage of the Criminal Law Amendment (CLA) Bill that had been delayed in parliament for several years as a result of political vacillation over direct state intervention in moral issues. A full account of this remarkable demonstration which attracted an estimated 250,000 people has been provided by Bristow in *Vice and Vigilance* where he describes the coming together of churchmen, feminists, liberals, socialists and union leaders alike in an impressive display of purity symbolism and imagery.[17]

Bolstered by the collapse of state regulated prostitution and the corresponding demise of medical discourse in terms of policy-making control, purity workers began to initiate their own agenda of sexual reform through the criminal legislature.[18] The CLA Act of 1885 succeeded in raising the age of consent for girls from 13 to 16. More controversially, it enshrined stronger penalties for brothel-owners and greater police powers of entry and arrest. The ramifications of Hopkins' involvement in these proceedings for feminist objectives will be explored in Chapter 5. Soliciting on the streets, including the creation of new offences around male homosexuality was also criminalized and made subject to police prosecution.

In order to enforce the working of the Act, Stead established the National Vigilance Association (NVA) in 1885. The purity activities of the NVA have received fairly comprehensive treatment and it is not my intention to restate these accounts here.[19] Hopkins had helped Stead organize the Hyde Park Rally and was a member of the executive committee of the NVA in 1886 along with Josephine Butler, Millicent Fawcett, the Methodist leader Percy Bunting and Catherine Booth. Under the organizational abilities of its secretary William Coote, the NVA boasted three hundred local vigilance branches by 1888, liaising with other purity organizations such as the Nonconformist Gospel Purity Alliance and Hopkins' own WCA.[20] As a loose network of lobby groups, the social purity movement developed simultaneously along varied fronts throughout the 1880s and 1890s in a determined and aggressive campaign to purify and elevate public morality. Hopkins' specific contribution to this process will be considered throughout Chapters 5, 6 and 7. Generally speaking though, purity activism included the closure of brothels and the prosecution of male offenders on behalf of the female victim; the suppression of indecent literature and entertainment (previously undertaken by the Vice Society); the dissemination of moral and educational literature, and the exposure of politicians, writers and artists whose private conduct or work was considered at odds with their public standing.

4.2.i Purity and the state.

The CLA Act is recognized by historians as a watershed in moral legislation, heralding a new, more coercive system of state intervention whereby preventive and rescue work was combined with a forceful legislative thrust to outlaw indecency, obscenity and foreign trafficking in young women. According to Mort, the "purity movement's stress on the criminal law to promote morality marked an important shift away from traditional strategies of environmental reform and private philanthropy".[21] Previous moral reform endeavour manifested libertarian and anti-governmental features in accordance with the atomistic construal of society proposed by J. S. Mill, who argued that "moral progress

could be attained only through individual moral self-cultivation".[22] Brian Harrison's article on "State Intervention and Moral Reform" argued that repeal campaigners had regarded the interference of the state as an improper disruption of the voluntary impulse, denying crucial opportunities for the exercise and development of personal restraint.[23] The primacy of individual reform was increasingly challenged by leading exponents of the Christian social gospel, however, during the latter half of the nineteenth-century. B. F. Westcott, a Cambridge High Churchman and first president of the Christian Social Union in 1889, spoke of the message of the incarnation as essentially one of human solidarity. "We are", he wrote in 1890, in *Christus Consummator :*

> ...literally members one of another; as men and nations. It was... fashionable to regard a state as an aggregation of individuals bound together by considerations of interest or pleasure. But now we have learnt...that the family and not the individual is the unit of human life...that the family, the nation, the race...cannot be broken up by any effort of individual will.[24]

Likewise, the charismatic Methodist spokesman Hugh Price Hughes was firmly committed to an organic view of society - "Jesus Christ legislated for man - not for individuals only, not for Christian churches only, but for man in all his relations, and in all his circumstances. He legislated for States."[25] This collective conscience of faith with its more corporate view of society encouraged confidence in the state as an agent of social improvement. Moral reformers emphasized the government's responsibility towards public morality and the need to prescribe limits to the operation of *laissez-faire* ethics. Through legislation they argued, the state would enable the individual to make the right moral choice by making it harder to do wrong. Thus the law was regarded as constructively pedagogical and not punitive, as an index of public opinion and the moral conscience of the nation. As Hughes observed "the real character of every nation is determined by the character of its laws".[26]

In order to carry out an effective policy of repression, purity workers depended upon a

mutual exchange of information between themselves, the police and the local authorities. Hopkins was adept at allying her campaigns with local officialdom, and in some of the large northern towns such as Leeds, Manchester and Liverpool, this approach worked with relative success.[27] What was originally intended as a joint effort between the state and purity agencies, however, was all too often fraught with problems of practical administration and political resistance. Both Harrison and Mort have argued that this period was dominated by an "uneasy dialogue between purists and the state"[28] which frequently undercut active government initiatives in the area of moral reform. The intense moral assiduousness and anti-aristocratic stance of male purity leaders such as William Coote, Alfred Dyer and Hugh Price Hughes meant that they were often treated as unwelcome intruders into parliamentary discourse, preachers of a topic regarded as beyond the remit of orthodox political discourse.[29] In reality therefore, despite the express shift towards interventionism in purity discourse, the bulk of successful legislative prosecutions against brothel-keeping, indecent advertising or pornography, remained as much a testimony to private, voluntary effort as to any centralized system of state surveillance.

4.3 THE CHURCHES AND SOCIAL PURITY.

Historians wishing to depict the "Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon" series as a primary catalyst of the moral panic of the 1880s and the ensuing emergence of social purity, have frequently neglected the element of continuity between existing purity activism and Stead's "New Journalism".[30] The role of the chapels and churches, particularly that of the female laity, was a crucial factor in this sequence of events. The multiple spheres of reform endeavour undertaken by purity feminists such as Ellice Hopkins, Josephine Butler and Sarah Robinson not only prepared the way for a moral climate conducive to the favourable reception of such media sensationalism, but created a nascent organisational network of vigilance groups able to respond immediately to the moral gauntlet thrown down by Stead. Hopkins' expert testimony on child prostitution

before the House of Lords Select Committee in 1881 had proved instrumental in the convoluted passage of the CLA Act, for it was on this occasion that the raising of the age of female sexual consent from 13 to 16 years was first recommended.[31] In January 1883, an interdenominational convention met to memorialize parliament and protest against the threatened continuation of the CD Acts. Such was the scale of churches' petition that the government suspended operation of the Acts in April, finally abolishing them three years later. As Bebbington has noted, this "upsurge of outraged Christian opinion" [32] demonstrated that institutional religion was still a major force to be reckoned with in discourses concerning private and public morality. The simultaneous launch of the WCA and the Church of England Purity Society (CEPS) the following May, both of which are further explored in Chapter 6, indicated the churches' concern to maintain political momentum over moral issues. The Nonconformist Gospel Purity Alliance founded in 1884 by George Gillet, Robert Scott and Robert Morgan, sent out a team of lecturers distributing pledge cards for purity and agitating for support of the proposed CLA Bill.[33] When Stead published his celebrated articles in 1885 therefore, he was simpy adding fuel to an already smouldering fire.

Paul McHugh's *Prostitution and Victorian Social Reform* (1980) has shown the way in which recruitment of various denominational backing was of vital importance in providing the earlier repeal campaign with an image of Christian respectability.[34] Similarly, when Stead, himself the son of a Congregationalist minister and a member of Wimbledon Congregational church, publicized Andrew Mearns' theme of "outcast London" in the *Pall Mall Gazette,* it was the churches that he first appealed to for help and decisive action. In July 1885 he wrote to Archbishop Benson asking for his sanction and blessing upon a vigilance movement "conducted on broadly representative lines",[35] and enquiring as to whether or not the Hyde Park demonstration should take place on a Sunday. In view of the extremity of his actions, Stead retained a surprising level of support from church leaders. He had obtained his information for the "Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon" in typically flamboyant manner, disguising himself as an upper-class

rake ostensibly to purchase a young virgin for immoral purposes. His subsequent, somewhat ironic prosecution and imprisonment for an infringement of the very law he sought to expose - the illegal abduction of an under-age girl - was greeted with an understandably mixed reaction by ecclesiastical elites. In a letter to Percy Bunting, Bishop Lightfoot commented that "it was indeed sad that Mr Stead should spoil an especially good cause by such inconceivably bad taste and lack of judgment".[36] The amount of literature on Stead's Defence Fund in the Archbishop Benson Papers, however, and the generous subscriptions raised from various individuals and congregations for his legal costs and the support of his family, suggest that many were prepared to overlook the folly of his exploits in favour of the substantial change wrought in public opinion.[37] Hopkins, who had worked closely with him between 1883 and 1885 over strategies in sustaining anti-vice momentum, described him as a "much abused man"[38] who had so quickened people's sense of moral awareness that during the latter half of her ten year campaign she had found herself "moving in another world".[39] Like Bishop Lightfoot she was unconvinced of the wisdom of some of Stead's methods, but reserved judgment in the light of the successful passage of the CLA Act. She raised over £950 for Stead's fund alone, observing that "in this work GOD stretches His hand across any number of mistakes, any amount of unwise actions, and blesses SACRIFICE. Mr Stead has made awful sacrifices, risked ruin to his own wife and little children...and the blessing is his".[40]

4.3.i Denominational responses to social purity.

Purity campaigns are a noteworthy example of the interdenominational character of the late Victorian social gospel. Few congregations surpassed Nonconformity's enthusiastic embracing of moral reform. As Bebbington has convincingly argued, although prominent in movements for abolitionism, temperance, sabbatarianism and gambling, the real origins of the Nonconformist conscience lay in the movement for repeal.[41] The Baptist leader John Clifford and Hugh Price Hughes were prominent advocates of Butler's campaign against the CD Acts and secured ongoing Baptist and Wesleyan commitment to

sexual purity. As the only Nonconformist denomination to supply military chaplains to the armed forces, the Wesleyan Methodists' interest in the moral reform of servicemen made them vociferous advocates for repeal.[42] In their third annual report of 1883, the Moral Reform Union (MRU), the most explicitly feminist of the purity societies, noted approvingly the "frequent meetings for the repeal cause" organized by the Baptist Congregations and "the Wesleyan body [which] had distinguished itself by its organized action in the same direction".[43] Likewise, the first executive committee of the predominantly Nonconformist NVA in 1886 was chaired by the Methodist Percy Bunting, one of leading lights of social purity.

A similar pattern of early repeal advocacy followed by a commitment to social purity emerged amongst Quaker and Congregationalist communities as well. By 1874, 90% of Quaker ministers had expressed their opposition to the CD Acts as had the Baptists and smaller Methodist connexions. Whilst exhibiting some initial apprehension over the delicacy of the subject matter, by 1881 1,950 out of 2,459 ministers within the Congregationalist Union were advocates of total repeal.[44] An active Congregationalist social purity organisation was established of which the indefatigable feminist Laura Ormiston Chant was a leading member, addressing over 400 purity meetings in a single year alone.[45]

It was to the great detriment of the repeal cause *and* the purity movement, that doctrinal wrangles and fears of popular anti-papist sentiment precluded the active recruitment of the Catholic churches by social purists. Alongside his involvement in social reform issues such as temperance, Cardinal Manning proved himself an influential exponent of purity, identifying with the cause as early as 1873.[46] Yet in 1874, the year that the Public Worship Regulation Act was first enforced, repeal leader and Liberal front-bencher James Stansfeld confided privately to Josephine Butler, "I rather fear getting Manning; the Protestant feeling against him must be strong now; had we not better leave him in the

dark till we get some hold of the Church of England".[47] As McHugh has observed, "repealers did not dare to arouse Protestant wrath by appealing for Catholic support".[48] In the light of the taciturn response to purity by the established Church it was, with hindsight, a particularly regrettable course of action.

Anglicanism was a good deal more reticent and belated than other denominations in its authorization of purity reform. Judith Walkowitz has suggested that an identification with corporate establishment interests, and concern with public order and control of vice rather than its total eradication made the Church of England hierarchy instinctive supporters of state regulated prostitution.[49] McHugh's discussion of religion and the repeal campaign indicates that "over a third of the signatories to an extensionist memorial in 1868 were Anglican clergy"[50] who considered the CD Acts as "morally beneficial" to society. No collective stand was ever taken on repeal by the established Church. George Butler's repeated denial of preferment because of his wife's political activities was a blatant indication of ecclesiastical antipathy at a time when the majority of Nonconformist denominations had committed themselves fully to the issue.[51]

Contrary to many historians' accounts, Hopkins was an emphatic opponent of regulation which she depicted as encouraging a "lessening hold on all sense of the sacredness of personal rights, till whole classes of the community cease to be persons, and become things to be regulated as they regulate gin-shops, or factory chimneys".[52] In her pamphlet *Conquering and to Conquer vol. I* (1886), Hopkins recounted with disgust the now notorious clerical barracking of George Butler's paper on social purity delivered at the Nottingham Church Congress of 1872, and how every time he referred to "the subject of immoral legislation and state regulation of vice" he was "literally howled down, and...not allowed to proceed in his carefully worded paper".[53] George Butler was exceptional in his outright condemnation of the Acts during the 1870s. Even after their suspension in 1883, the attitude of many clergy remained highly ambiguous towards regulation. According to the MRU's 1884 annual report, members of the newly founded

CEPS entertained such opposing views on the subject that the society had been established "on the understanding that the CD Acts should not be discussed".[54] Nevertheless, at an annual meeting in 1885 the Bishop of Marlborough, the Rev. Dr. Edghill chaplain to the forces, and Lt. Colonel Herbert Everitt, previously of the Royal Marine Artillery and now secretary of the CEPS, declared themselves in favour of a return to state regulated prostitution. Everitt had been a staunch supporter of the Acts throughout. The Bishop of Marlborough admitted that whilst once an opponent of regulation, experience had subsequently convinced him otherwise. Edghill admitted that "his heart went one way and his judgment the other",[55] but was ultimately convinced that their abolition had led to "bad results". The CEPS according to the MRU's report, eventually "resolved to memorialize Lord Salisbury, the Home Secretary, and the Chiefs of the War and Naval Depts. to endeavour to bring in a modified form" of the Acts, as "popular sentiment would never allow them to reinstate them fully".[56]

Of course, repeal did attract some Anglican support and from a reasonable cross-section of the Church, including Broad Churchmen like Archdeacon Sandford, Evangelicals like Francis Close, Dean of Carlisle, and the High Churchman Edward Pusey who, in *The Shield,* July 1879, declared the CD Acts as "tyrannical and demoralising".[57] By the mid 1880s, the length and scale of the debate had begun to break down initial hostility with a more open, inquisitive attitude materializing among the Anglican clergy. Stead's journalistic revelations meant that discussions of sexual morality which had proved so problematic at Church Congress levels ten years earlier, were now a matter of national and international concern. In such a charged climate the Church was obliged to speak out.

This development was further facilitated by the progressive leadership of Archbishop Benson whose commitment to moral purity should not be underestimated, yet has proved a greatly neglected feature of his career by ecclesiastical historians.[58] A Cambridge undergraduate during William Hopkins' time, Benson ascended quickly to the Primacy through a combination of what John Tosh has described as the characteristic marks of the

new Victorian man - ambition, self-denial, sobriety and piety.[59] In both his farewell sermon at Wellington College in 1873 and his enthronement speech ten years later, specific reference was made to male sexual purity - "So shall your hearts beat strong with energy, yet be cool through self-restraint".[60] Benson remained convinced of the Church's role in re-educating men along essentially Arnoldian lines of rigorous moral virtue. It is appropriate and certainly no coincidence that both the WCA and the CEPS were established in the first year of his archiepiscopate. Hopkins' major contribution to the clerical volte-face regarding social purity has never been properly acknowledged by scholars. Historical timing and Church leadership were clearly more fortuitous for her than for her repeal predecessors in the 1870s and she consolidated such advantages in decisive fashion. Many Anglican elites were converted to social purity by Hopkins in a way that Josephine Butler, for all her charismatic oratory, had been unable to accomplish.[61] The following discussion outlines precisely how Hopkins achieved such a radical subversion of dominant clerical discourses of anti-purity reform.

4.4 CONVERTING THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND TO PURITY: THE ROLE OF ELLICE HOPKINS.

Two broad, determining factors in Hopkins' productive confrontation with the Anglican hierarchy throughout the latter decades of the nineteenth-century can be ascertained. First her powers of public persuasion already referred to in Chapter 3, and secondly her success as a pressure-group tactician. As an exponent of social purity, Hopkins did not rely exclusively on ecclesiastical networks, speaking at town halls, local community rooms, universities and on church premises alike. She did regard institutionalized religion as a primary agent of moral reform, however, and an essential structural framework through which to direct her campaign operations. Throughout her nationwide purity tour she was always careful in each town to first organize diocesan meetings for the local clergy so as to gain whatever ecclesiastical support possible. Outside of Barrett's references in *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* the only surviving first-hand account

of this procedure is by Mrs McLagan, the Bishop of Lichfield's wife who recorded in her diary at some length Hopkins' visit to Lichfield in 1880:

> ...[Hopkins] held a private meeting in our dining room to which the bishop had invited the two assistant bishops, the four archdeacons, and twenty or thirty of the leading clergy in the diocese. Miss Hopkins spent the morning in the cathedral in earnest prayer...till she was summoned....she was quivering in every limb when the door opened and the bishop said, 'We are quite ready for you'. Truly it was an awful ordeal for that small pale woman to stand alone and tell her dreadful story, but the bishop told me her voice never faltered, while tears were streaming down the rugged faces of Bishops Abraham and Hobhouse, Archdeacon Iles and others.[62]

In addition to her oratorical ability, Hopkins was an extremely efficient and persistent agitator of hierarchical authority. The papers of Archbishops Tait and Benson at Lambeth Palace Library indicate a regular correspondence between Hopkins and the two Primates, she urging them to inspire the Church to immediate action on behalf of social purity.[63] On July 25th, 1879 not long after the death of his wife Catherine, she wrote to Archbishop Tait informing him of the present deficiencies of the Industrial Schools Act which failed to legislate for the moral welfare of girls under 14. She implored him in memory of his wife, to continue Mrs Tait's keen interest in "the deepest and saddest blot on our Christianity".[64] On another occasion in April 1885, she wrote several times to Mary Benson, asking her to bring to the notice of her husband the lowering of the age of female sexual protection from 16 to 15 years that had occurred in the third introduction of the CLA Bill to Parliament. "As a measure for protecting the young [it] is completely crippled", she declared, "I know that he [Benson] will use his powerful influence in the House of Lords on our side".[65]

Maintaining extensive knowledge of parliamentary proceedings on moral legislation such as the Industrial Schools Amendment (ISA) Act and the CLA Bill was crucial to Hopkins' lobbying tactics. Unable to gain access to parliamentary debate herself, she

sought to gain a hearing by collating information and statistics, and ensuring that the desired argument arrived in the relevant episcopal hands. She was helped enormously by her secretary Emily Janes who assimilated information on specific case-studies drawn from regional LACFGs with the appropriate legal developments.[66] In this way Hopkins was able to present an extremely cogent and pertinent appeal for purity, keeping those in positions of greater political influence well-informed on the sexual plight of young women and children.

Throughout her thirty years' experience of rescue work, Hopkins consistently harangued ecclesiastical Convocations, Church Congresses, diocesan meetings and individual clergymen on the many injustices of the moral double standard. One of her most forceful and courageous attacks was presented in a paper entitled *A Plea for the Wider Action of the Church of England in the Prevention of the Degradation of Women,* delivered at the annual conference of the Church Penitentiary Association (CPA) in May, 1879 and submitted again two months later to the Lower House of Convocation on Prostitution. The *Plea* was Hopkins' first call for an organized attack on the root causes of prostitution as opposed to what she regarded as the superficial palliatives on offer by church penitentiaries. The pamphlet resulted in the formation of two major Anglican agencies for male chastity as will be seen in Chapter 6. It also contained the rudiments of a radical critique of the apathetic ecclesiastical response to social purity articulated at greater length thoughout her subsequent prescriptive writings.

4.4.i Speaking out on sex.

One of the social purity movement's most defining features was a concern to speak out boldly about sex and challenge institutional positions that claimed immorality as beyond the parameters of civilized discourse.[67] Fear of public scandal was particularly prominent in Anglican establishment thinking. Hopkins was well aware that the inability of the Church to rectify its view on the prevailing ideology of the male sexual imperative lay in a

fundamental unwillingness to engage openly with and educate Christian consciousness on the question of sexual purity. It was a strange and sad anomaly she wrote in the preface to the *Plea,* that both the highest elevation and the most profound, systematic degradation of womanhood by man, were to be found in Christian civilizations:

> Surely the Church, which believes in the INCARNATION, that God sent forth His own Son made of a woman, will cease to look supinely on her desecration, or to combat it only by the most inadequate and desultory means...and realise something of the divine ideal of womanhood.[68]

Hopkins' message to her clerical contemporaries was loud and clear. Ignorance and avoidance of sexual issues was a prime cause of immorality, cultivating an atmosphere of mystery and secrecy in which "the germs of impurity" proved "most fecund".[69] Through its "utter want of all teaching or training on the all-important subject of purity",[70] the Church had become an implicit contributor to the present lascivious climate. With no clear guidance from the pulpit it was precisely this sort of privileged moral apathy that had destroyed the credibility of religion for many thoughtful people:

> ...this cowardly fear of a stain to our own souls in saving the souls of others, this base acceptance of the defilement of others as long as it is only the helpless girls of the poor...may it not be this that has made the oaken timbers of the ark of the Church rot and gape, and let in the waters of death?[71]

Invoking the Bible against its official interpreters, she reminded churchmen that in the Old Testament sexual impurity was a symbol of departure and alienation from the Divine. The Bible set no precedence of silence - "it does not speak so much as thunder against impurity"[72] - and Christ reserved his greatest condemnation not for the "blundering, mistaken or the erring, but to the indifferent".[73] Referring to the thousands of obscene prints, photographs, songs and catalogues retrieved by the Vice Society between 1834 and 1880 as well as the sensationalist revelations of evil by the journalist Stead, she

remarked wryly in her 1886 pamphlet *The Present Moral Crisis. An Appeal to Women,* "It does seem sardonic in this flood of foul speech to talk about keeping silence on this subject, which can only mean the Church enforcing silence that the Devil may be the better heard".[74]

4.4.ii Defining purity.

Hopkins' desire to educate society positively in matters of sexual discernment brought her into direct conflict with many church leaders over a fundamental disagreement in the interpretation of social purity. Purity was defined by Hopkins as "the rational response of the moral emotions to the facts of the world in which we live".[75] It was a highly positive moral and ontological concept - "the meeting-point of the spiritual and the physical, the human and the divine"[76] - which constituted an altruistic search for the ultimate possibilities of human spiritual and social existence. Without purity, she argued, humanity had no divine vision and could not see God. Her passionate defence of purity as the very locus of the sacred led Hopkins to a scathing attack upon those clergy whose analysis of sexual chastity was limited to an energetic preaching of the seventh commandment. In a critique of an unnamed Evangelical prelate who typified such "thou shalt not" mentality, she tiraded contemptuously against clerics who believed that if they "only hurled those old blocks of Sinaitic granite often and emphatically enough at men's heads,...their hearts would be broken into contrition and the evil would be remedied".[77] The self-righteousness of ministers who adhered to "the paralysing traditions of the elders"[78] had fostered an entirely negative conception of anti-impurity. Purity was thus wrongly perceived as a "powerful but poisonous drug...to be handled with extreme care".[79] Undeceived by such alarmist rhetoric which she saw as a device to explicitly prohibit women's contributory discussions to the subject, Hopkins wrote testily, "The purity which is unfit for a woman's eye is to me a very suspicious thing to begin with".[80]

Her essential differentiation between positive and negative interpretations of purity,

articulated most clearly in *The Secret and Method of Purity. Expressly Addressed to Christian Workers* (1886) was grounded in a strongly anti-individualist sentiment reflective of the social, corporate vision of the gospel spreading throughout many High Church quarters. The Church's reading of anti-impurity as the crude suppression of "polluting" knowledge about sex had developed from a mistakenly self-centred interpretation of sin and redemption, "that 'loveth its own life' and thinks only of itself and its own precariousness".[81] "The purity...that shrinks from knowing or doing anything that is necessary for saving another is not purity but prurience"[82] she advised a group of female district visitors in 1882, a cruel, self-righteous prudery with an "absorbing care for its own alabaster skin [and]...blank *laissez-faire* acceptance of all the causes that make for the degradation of women".[83] The purity of Christ on the other hand, was "emphatically not the purity of ignorance",[84] but a passion for the wronged and weak, and for the discerning of God in the meanest of His creatures. To those reformers anxious about the possibility of their own moral self-contamination through such work, she explained that if their souls were absorbed in another's good and entirely lacking in self-consciousness, then they might secure a knowledge of sexual purity that did not taint or defile. Purity in action she declared, that "goes forth to help and...save others, is like the lovely mountain stream that comes flashing down from the heights...too living as it bounds along to take up the defilements of the earth".[85]

4.4.iii Re-reading the body.

This positive construal of purity had as its corollary, a remarkably affirmative approach to the body and human sexuality. Hopkins viewed the relation of the material and spiritual planes, of "the body with its instincts and appetites to the moral personality with its conscience and will" [86] as a dilemma of fundamental importance to the modern world. She saw society as faced with two dominant moral alternatives - asceticism and hedonism - and rejected both of them as equally disparaging of the sacredness of human embodiment. As already noted, purity as a mere suppression of vice, a "physicking down

of our appetites and passions within the required limits"[87] was an anathema to Hopkins. Not surprisingly, she refuted unequivocally the traditional Christian expression of religious asceticism with its portrayal of the physical body as innately depraved and its subsequent negation of the corporeal in order to pursue the path of holiness:

> To look down on the material, to regard all material pleasures with suspicion, to fly contact with the rude world and lose itself in the unembodied splendours of the spiritual, to save souls rather than men and women, to preach abstract doctrines rather than grapple with hideous concrete problems has been the teaching of the religious ascetics in all ages.[88]

She was similarly suspicious of the secular alternative as represented by the "fleshly school"[89] of poets led by Rossetti and Swinburne who, under the pretext of the consummation of the human body and in the name of "enlightened self-interest", had embraced a hedonistic and excessive "obedience to nature".[90] Protestations of "healthy animalism" [91] from doubting intellectuals who argued that Christianity sought only to prohibit that which was perfectly natural all too frequently degenerated into formulae for moral decay. Hedonism advocated a lewd sensualism that neglected the spiritual elements of the human form. What then, Hopkins asked, could save us from "the self-mortification of asceticism" or "the swinishness of the fleshly school?"[92] Only the teaching of Christ which was to "neither hate and fear this part of your nature with the ascetic, nor pamper and stimulate it with the Hedonist, but let it alone to act on its own plane, trust it...and leave it...to its own unconscious activity".[93]

Curtailed as she was by the language available, Hopkins' discourse of the body frequently resorted to traditional dualistic terminology regarding higher and lower planes. Rather than interpreting this as a conventional reiteration of the subordination of the body to the mind, I would argue that there was a far stronger emphasis upon the *elevation* of the body onto a higher plane of existence. Despite the central truths of the atonement,

reconciliation and salvation contained within the Pauline gospel, Hopkins believed that the Christian faith in its fullest and most complete expression was "the Christianity of St. John, of which the central truth is the Incarnation, the consecration of our bodies as well as our souls".[94] Thus her positive attitude to corporeality was grounded in an incarnational theology which contested the innate sinfulness of the human form and instead gave dignity to physical life. The body, not to be subsumed or negated by the mental faculties, was to function as an integral feature in the development of an essentially spiritual being. It was a "temple fearfully built",[95] where service to God in the form of active discipleship was carried out. In the *Plea,* Hopkins argued that the Church had much to learn from science on this issue:

> ...we still have to make a vigorous effort to shake ourselves from what I should call the dregs of asceticism, the sense that our bodies are more or less the seat of evil, that there is something low and shameful about some of their highest functions...the Christian church has yet got frankly to receive the teaching of modern science, that this 'matter' which we have been accustomed to call 'brute', 'gross', 'dead' is...a glory and a wonder...[and] to recognise the material part of us as a far more vital factor in the divine life than she at present does; to teach with far more emphasis that the body is the temple of the Holy...we need to reverence the body to recognise its functions as sacramental.[96]

Writing in the December 1883 edition of the High Church penitentiary journal *Seeking and Saving: A Monthly Journal of Home Mission and Penitentiary Work,* Hopkins felt confident that the "policy of the ostrich was now definitively abandoned" and that "the National Church at last was agreed that the evil must be faced".[97] She had been responsible for creating a female platform upon which to speak out on sex, for literally naming human sexuality and placing it firmly within the orbit of ecclesiastical discourse. In so doing she championed what might be described as a late nineteenth-century "theology of embodiment"[98] by rejecting much of the traditional dualism of Christian thought and advocating a new respect and veneration for human bodiliness.

In his 1952 essay on the "White Cross League" Sherwin Bailey was the first historian to credit Hopkins with the consciousness-raising of the Anglican hierarchy in terms of purity.[99] Since then one or two scholars have made passing mention of this feature of her career, but so far no attention has been paid to the extent or depth of her doctrinal challenge to ecclesiastical hierarchy.[100] Whilst unable to fully avoid either linguistically or conceptually the binary opposites of mind and body, her progressive understanding of sexual purity and correspondingly positive interpretation of the body defied the Manichaeanism of many clerics and proffered a new paradigm of moral purity grounded in the physical reality of embodiment. The ramifications of this reclaiming of the body as a locus for divine experience will be examined later in this thesis with reference to her constructions of gender and her interpretation of marital relations. Hopkins' critique of and frustration with the institutional apathy of the Anglican hierarchy towards social purity also led indirectly to organizational expansion through her formulation of a powerful female religious subculture.

4.5 THE FEMALE CULTURE OF PURITY.

One of most distinctive compositional features of the purity movement was the predominance of women activists within its ranks. Whilst the exact proportion of male and female participation has never been determined by historians, the emphasis upon the sexual abuse of women and children made purity reform an obviously female concern.[101] Through rescue and preventive work, local vigilance committees, fundraising and moral lobby groups, thousands of respectable Christian women entered the political arena for the first time in the cause of purity and their influence was felt at every level of debate. Although a project well worth undertaking in itself, a detailed profile or collective biographical study of women purists lies beyond the remit of this thesis. In the following discussion therefore, I will present only a general overview of the main determining features of the loose and complex structure of women's purity work by way of introduction to Hopkins' significant contribution to this lively female culture.

Since its mid-century expansion, rescue work or magdalenism had come to be regarded as an increasingly female and religiously-orientated affair.[102] The rapid diversification and specialization of rescue organizations during the latter half of the nineteenth-century greatly enhanced the breadth and extent of a female moral reform culture. Training homes, emigration work, girls' evening clubs, educational work, homes for unmarried mothers and unemployed servants, clothing clubs, midnight missions and night refuges were just some of the many types of purity activity listed in the pages of *Seeking and Saving* between 1881 and 1890.[103] Purity's essentially nonsectarian character meant that women's contributions spanned a broad religious spectrum. From Anglo-Catholic penitentiaries to Salvation Army homes, from the Jewish Association for the Protection of Girls and Women to the Evangelical Female Mission to the Fallen, there were enough rescue workers to visit and oversee the nation's brothels which stood at about 7,000 in the 1870s, on a regular basis.[104] Hopkins' own LACFGs were "perfectly unsectarian" from the outset. As she declared in *Work in Brighton,* "we are of all denominations, the religious question being too much known as a power to be felt as a difficulty".[105]

An analysis of the range of women's activities referred to throughout purity tracts locates them within the overall development from individualist to collectivist efforts, of late-Victorian social work and the moral administration of the urban classes.[106] Considerable financial and organizational resourcefulness was required in order to feed, clothe and find employment for the inmates of rescue homes or industrial schools. Fanny Vicars' Albion Hill Home in Brighton had room for 77 women for whom any combination of overdue rent, travelling expenses when returning home, marriage fees, babies put out to nurse, grocery tickets, or training and outfits for domestic service had to be found.[107]

In addition to traditional individualist charitable efforts such as visiting the homes of the poor, purity women were early contributors to institutional forms of welfare training such as the infant care centres of the early twentieth-century.[108] By establishing girls' recreative evening homes which offered sewing and clothing clubs, and mothers'

meetings with lessons on family hygiene and household management, they provided social centres for the moral and material benefit of working-class women. To what extent such activities proved punitive and disciplinary of the moral habits of the poor, or educative and empowering, will be explored further in Chapter 5. Hopkins was deeply committed to enabling working women and families to help themselves rather than prove passive recipients of upper-class charitable benevolence. She actively recruited respectable working-class women onto the staff of her rescue homes, industrial schools and girls' clubs, in the belief that their greater social identification with the potential prostitute or unruly young female, would augment the process of "resocialization".[109] Despite her insistence that purity work should not be undertaken for anything other than the highest moral and spiritual motives, she criticized organizations such as the CPA for their elitist attitude towards paid women workers. Dependent working women who formed the majority of staff at the Albion Hill Home, and independent working ladies alike were labourers equally "worthy of their hire". "Is there not room for both", she asked in the *Plea,* "for Training Homes worked by self-devoted sisters, and by a lady-superintendent and self-devoted working women, who as having no independent means, must of course be paid?"[110]

Social purity thus comprised of women of all denominations, classes and political perspectives. Some of the most politically radical examples of female purity activism were to be found in the attempts to legislate against obscene forms of literature and entertainment such as Laura Ormiston Chant's much publicized attack on the music-halls. Parodied by the libertine press as simple-minded, interfering, self-righteous busybodies, these "Prudes on the Prowl" [111] as they were caricatured in a series run by the *Daily Telegraph* in 1894, were actually women of considerable intellectual and social standing. Hopkins' own advantaged cultural background has already been discussed. Ormiston Chant whilst not as prolific a writer as Hopkins, edited the NVA's *Vigilance Record* for many years and published several volumes of poetry and fiction.[112] In 1893, at the prestigious Chicago World Parliament of Religions, she addressed a huge scholarly

audience on "The Real Religion of To-day".[113] Millicent Fawcett, a faithful supporter of Stead and member of the executive committee of the NVA from 1886 to 1926, was a leading suffragist and "eminent female political economist".[114] Elizabeth Blackwell was a founder of the MRU and an enthusiastic campaigner for purity. She was also the first qualified woman doctor admitted to the British Medical Register in 1859. Describing herself as a "Christian physiologist"[115] she wrote *The Moral Education of the Young* in 1876, and *The Human Element in Sex* in 1884, essays which so impressed Hopkins that she helped Blackwell to find a publisher for them.[116]

Indeed, the important experience gained by women as public orators and serious writers constitutes my final significant feature in this discussion of female purity culture. In a selection of literature published by the NVA in February 1888, over half the available titles were written by women. Some, like Blackwell, the American temperance worker Frances Willard, Butler, Ormiston Chant and Fawcett are already historically acclaimed figures, but others - Mrs Lance, Mary Clifford, Maria Grey, Anna Lindsay and Mrs Bayley - have disappeared without trace.[117] Not unlike the mothers' meeting literary genre, purity gave many women an unprecedented initial outlet for their writing skills.[118] More significantly, it gave them an opportunity to reflect critically upon existing systems of Christian belief and morality, and proffer female-identified alternatives.

4.5.i. The contribution of Ellice Hopkins to female purity culture.

Social purity provides a salutary example of the way in which, as I explained in Chapter 2, arguments drawn from religion and philanthropy blurred and redefined the boundaries between the private and public domain for women. In a justifiable extension of their domestic role as moral educators, women's purity campaigning facilitated the emergence of a distinctive female public sphere which, whilst not a formalized community like the sisterhoods or female settlement houses of the late nineteenth-century, functioned as a

decidedly woman-controlled religious space. Epitomizing what Estelle Freedman has described as "female institution building",[119] a political strategy of separatist women's organizations, purity reform enabled the development of a women's power-base of immense emotional, spiritual and social significance.

Hopkins' contribution to the creation of this female culture cannot be overestimated. Throughout her campaigning career she was single-handedly responsible for the "political mobilisation"[120] of thousands of churchwomen and their advent as a contending force in the sexual politics of the 1880s and 1890s. According to Martha Vicinus, she became a household name in doing so.[121] In Cambridge, Hopkins had been an early pioneer of the mothers' meeting, what Prochaska has described as "the most pervasive female agency for bringing women together on a regular basis outside the home in British history".[122] The quintessence of Victorian parochial social service, the mothers' meeting was an apparently innocuous women's organization with a successful formula of needlework, health education and religious instruction. However, it also provided "a distinctly female form of Christian worship, which often served as a substitute for church or chapel attendance" [123] for working-class women. This gave educated women like Hopkins the opportunity to take on pastoral and priestly roles, preaching and leading informal services in an acceptable environment "without offending churchmen".[124] The mothers' meeting, as Mary Ryan has commented on other female segregated spheres of moral reform, allowed women the chance to "maximise their freedom and exert considerable social influence".[125]

Between 1878 and 1888, Hopkins formed branches of her preventive LACFGs in over 100 major British towns including Brighton, Cambridge, London, Bristol, Southampton, Torquay, Cheltenham, York, Edinburgh, Perth, Dublin, Birmingham, Manchester, Cardiff, Nottingham and Swansea.[126] Her rescue methods spawned a host of further female societies such as the Metropolitan Association for Befriending Young Servants established in 1877, Mary Steer's Ratcliff Highway Bridge of Hope Mission in 1879 and

St. Cyprien's Home for Unmarried Mothers in 1884.[127] Each LACFG held monthly committee meetings under a woman president to pray and discuss vigilance tactics.[128] The LACFGs functioned as local co-ordinators of anti-vice activities, organizing funds and staffing for rescue homes, offering lectures in chastity education and streamlining regional purity efforts into a cohesive national moral offensive. The emphasis on networking stimulated a diversity of related female initiatives for improving standards of female health, education and employment. Most prominent of these ventures was the National Union of Women Workers (NUWW), the foundation of which according to their 1906 *Handbook and Report* had been inspired by Hopkins' visits to Barnsley and Aberdeen in 1876 and a subsequent conference of the Yorkshire LACFG in 1889.[129] Formally constituted in 1895 under the presidency of Louise Creighton, wife of the Bishop of London, the NUWW aimed "to link together all women workers for women - whatever churches they belonged to, however different their fields of work - into one body".[130] The NUWW continued the assault upon male sexual behaviour well into the following century, passing a series of annual conference resolutions which called for further amendments to criminal legislation against incest, and the raising of the female age of consent to 18.[131] Without undermining the very real efforts made by men such as Stead, Hugh Price Hughes, Percy Bunting and at a later point several key members of the Anglican clerical-elite, social purity at its grass-roots level was a movement initiated and directed by the hard-pressed energies of women like Hopkins. When Scott Holland proposed a separate women's section of the all-male CEPS in 1883, she wrote back in exasperation that such an idea was simply "not practicable",[132] as through the national power-bases of the Girl's Friendly Society, the Young Women's Help Society, The Young Women's Christian Association and her own LACFGs, women already had as many organizations as they could "work and officer".[133]

Social purity provides a particularly salient historical example of female institution building for unlike temperance reform, the delicacy of the topic promoted a thoroughgoing practice of gender segregation.[134] Public meetings for example, were

rarely mixed. Despite her advocacy of purity as a "good wholesome food unquestionably safe for any adult to inwardly digest",[135] Hopkins always addressed audiences of men and women separately. Nor is there any indication that she considered this disadvantageous. Her frequent references to "this great women's movement...its new sense of a common womanhood and esprit de corps"[136] suggest that, unlike the liberal feminist MRU who strongly resented the sex-specific composition of purity organizations, Hopkins viewed the discrete gender-based culture of moral reform as the most positive and effective way for churchwomen to successfully manoeuvre for power within the ecclesiastical and wider social communities.[137]

Ever pragmatic, her bitter experience of successive Anglican Church Congresses in which constructive discussion of women's preventive and vigilance work had been vigorously suppressed made her wary of mixed societies as not only improprietous, but a threat to women's self-defined autonomy and influence over purity issues. "I fear what I must call a decided tendency on the part of men to keep us out of our own question, to hide it up from our eyes and not to let us face it".[138] As co-founder of the WCA with Bishop Lightfoot in 1883, her delight at the Church's eventual take-up of male chastity was tempered by the concern over women's ability to maintain their own bases of moral power and representation. "The movement among men is going on so rapidly", she wrote in the October editorial of *Seeking and Saving,* "that I cannot help a feeling of jealousy lest our women's movement should fail to keep abreast with it". [139]

A major difficulty with separatist organisations was that women were less likely to achieve a parity of authoritative involvement on policy-making committees. This was particularly true of the Anglican purity societies. According to the list of the nondenominational NVA Council of 1886, a little over 25% were women. Of those 33 members, 26 were also on the Executive Committee and constituted almost 50% of the NVA Executive's total numbers.[140] By contrast, the representation of women at this

level in either the WCA or the CEPS was negligible. Despite her dominant leadership of the White Cross, Hopkins' role was clearly an exceptional one. In 1909, the White Cross League was still admitting women as associate members only for intercessory prayers and fund-raising activities.[141]

Hopkins never departed from her staunch advocacy of a separate institutional female purity culture, but her increasing frustration with the way in which male enthusiasm appeared to be hijacking many of purity's underlying feminist premises led her to demand the greater inclusion of women in male societies. Her fundamental belief that women should be consulted at every stage of policy-making on purity legislation, if only in an advisory capacity, drew her into some heated confrontations with Anglican purists. "If women feel themselves excluded from their own question" she warned:

> ...they will oppose its action with the intense jealousy that... advanced women feel with regard to the action of men only, on this subject. And to wonder when men have supported such legislation as those Nameless Acts on the ground of their being in the interest of women and morality. If the thing is to work must you not have women with you and not against you?[142]

To Scott Holland she suggested that the all-male Central Council of the CEPS consist also of Lady Referees, "and that the local committees be left open".[143] Then, she concluded, "you would always have a test of women-feeling, for the want of which men have made such grievous blunders".[144] It is unclear as to whether or not Scott Holland complied formally with Hopkins' request. The CEPS Council Minutes and Annual Reports between 1883 and 1895 indicate little female input, however, and the mission statements after 1895 exhibit a definite nonfeminist tendency, as the emphasis on male chastity became entwined with issues of national identity and racial purity.[145]

4.5.ii. Recruiting for purity.

Ongoing controversy over female participation in sexual politics meant that the effective

mobilization of women into social purity required a particularly convincing discourse of recruitment. In her discussion of Frances Willard, leader of the Women's Christian Temperance Union from 1879 to 1897, Suzanne Marilley has illustrated how Willard's ability to attract members and keep them was dependent upon a highly persuasive discourse, or "feminism of fear".[146] This rhetoric struck at the heart of women's anxieties concerning public campaigning and mitigated them through an ideology comprised of the exaltation of familiar metaphors of motherhood and domesticity. Like Willard, Hopkins' appeal to action combined the orthodox female values of the private sphere with religious inspiration. In view of its separatist female culture, purity feminism naturally drew upon a rhetoric that celebrated the virtues of women as distinct from men. Exploiting the idealization of feminine sovereignty in the home, the elevation of the maternal principle, the moral superiority and greater compassion of the female sex, Hopkins' primary defence for the right of women to enter public debates on sexual purity was that it touched upon all the sacred trusts of womanhood - "the sanctity of the family, the purity of the home, the loftiness of love and the sacredness of marriage".[147] Social purity was fundamentally a woman's issue because it was *male* sexual impurity that lay at the source of the evil. "As women, we are the natural guardians of the innocence of all children", she wrote in *The Power of Womanhood,* "as the mothers of the future generation of men, you must look upon it as your divinely-appointed task to bring back the moral law in its entirety, the one standard binding upon men and women alike".[148]

By appropriating dominant ideologies of femininity, Hopkins sought to allay colleagues' fears as to the impropriety of vigilance and preventive work. Yet she did not underplay the very real demands required:

> ...if we think...that we can quench this pit of perdition in our midst by... emptying our scent-bottles upon it, by shedding a few empty tears, heaving a few sentimental sighs...possibly even giving a little money...to a penitentiary - all I can say is, God is not mocked.[149]

To encourage reticent, respectable churchwomen who hung back in fear and repulsion from such an undertaking, Hopkins sanctioned her agenda with divine authority. By means of a feminist biblical interpretation, she overturned scriptural injunctions to women's silence and exclusion from public roles in favour of a reading of the Passion that called upon women to exercise their God-given mandate as moral saviours of humanity:

> The women who at first "stood afar off, beholding these things"...at last "stood by the cross of JESUS"; and, when all men forsook Him and fled, placed themselves heart to heart with the Divine Love bearing the sins of the world...Shall we obey the divine call, enduring the cross, and, like the women of old, win for ourselves, by faithfulness unto death, the joy of being made the messengers of a higher and risen life to the world?[150]

This was a prophetic time she declared, where the women's movement must prove itself a willing agent in the transformation of public life, and the creation of a new moral and ethical climate grounded in Christian principles:

> For to you as to a woman of old, it is given to you to save your nation; and to each one of us; as unto her, the words are said: if thou hold thy peace at this time, then shall relief and deliverance come from another quarter, but thou and thy father's house will be destroyed. And who knoweth whether thou art not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?[151]

Purity's consolidation of certain ethical values as distinctively feminine spilled over easily into a discourse of gender solidarity. Hopkins' pamphlet *Work in Brighton* was subtitled "Woman's Mission to Women", a common late-Victorian idiom for rescue work. Quoting Florence Nightingale she argued that "'we cannot stand neutral' - we must put off our womanhood itself before we can say this question has no claim on us. It has a claim from the mere fact that we are women".[152] As part of a rallying call to her middle-class sisters she urged, "I appeal to you not to stand by supinely...and see your own womanhood sunk into degradation...but, whatever it costs you, to join the vast silent

women's movement which is setting in all over England, in defence of your own womanhood".[153]

4.5.iii Feminism and female purity culture.

Jeffreys has remarked that "Hopkins would not have meant anything specifically feminist"[154] by her use of the term "women's movement", although she clearly saw herself as part of a great female uprising. To what extent the incontrovertible gender-awareness of purity discourse remained "prefeminist" in its perpetutation of traditional domestic values prompts larger considerations of the faith/feminism dialectic noted in Chapter 2. According to Freedman, "any female-dominated activity that places a positive value on women's social contributions, provides personal support, and is not controlled by antifeminist leadership has feminist political potential".[155] The realization of that potential depends primarily upon the specific historical circumstances. The limitation of Hopkins' recruitment discourse of social purity in terms of its feminist credentials was witnessed in her visit to Plymouth in 1880, in which plans forged with community leaders for an industrial school for brothel children and the establishment of an LACFG branch diverted and fragmented the repeal initiatives of existing local Ladies National Association committees. Most controversially, Hopkins' new Plymouth LACFG was kept informed of the whereabouts of young girls at risk by the despised Inspector Anniss, the diligent district law enforcer of the CD Acts.[156]

From her account of this episode, Walkowitz concludes that the religious component of purity obscured and diluted the feminist context of repeal, and that the popularity of purity rhetoric was the result of its moralistic goals offered in a "nonpolitical and noncontroversial framework".[157] In her pursuit of purity, Hopkins' political eclecticism undoubtedly manifested some problematic alliances. Likewise, her legitimation of women's role in rescue work failed to connect prostitution to larger feminist issues with quite the radical, uncompromising analysis of Josephine Butler. But the level of discrepancy between them has been exaggerated by Walkowitz and others. Towards the

end of her reform career Hopkins referred frequently to the need for female unionization and suffrage in the fight against women's sexual degradation:

> Let us do what we can to help in organizing women's labour, so that a living wage may be secured, and no woman be driven by starvation into selling herself for a morsel of bread. Let us endeavour to secure the franchise that we may have the power of legislating for the protection of women.[158]

The existence of prostitution, and "a democratical society" [159] were entirely at odds with each other for Hopkins. As custodians of domestic morality, women should also have a stake in "the larger family of the State", so that the Christian ideal of complementary leadership, "the work of the world...best done by the man and the woman together",[160] might be achieved. The "feminization" of society - the specifically feminine qualities that women could bring to government - as well as the need for women to be able to protect their own interests comprised a common feminist line of argument for the franchise.[161] As Millicent Fawcett argued in an address to the Central and East of England Society for Women's Suffrage, women should never surrender their "love of children...care for the sick...gentleness...[or] obedience to conscience and duty, for all these things are terribly wanted in politics".[162] Although not based on egalitarian principles of women's parliamentary representation, Hopkins' rationale for the vote was concurrent with that of the most committed suffragists of the period. Indeed, Marilley has suggested that a sexual politics which placed female security and protection first as opposed to "rights", could actually complement liberal arguments for the franchise by showing women how to create meaningful forms of political involvement for themselves without compromising their own feminine identities.[163] In conjunction with feminist historians' appreciation of the valuable support offered to nineteenth-century women by the seeming conservatism of separate organizations for the two sexes, I have argued, following the theories of Marilley and Freedman, that the female institution building of social purity was an explicitly politicized activity that mobilized religious women onto local and national purity platforms. Purity

feminism gave churchwomen a sense of personal autonomy and a realistic and achievable set of goals in terms of an agenda for social change. Faced with male intransigence such as that presented by the Anglican hierarchy, this particular expression of religious feminism should not be denigrated for its adherence to orthodox values. As Freedman has argued, at certain historical periods the creation of a separate female public sphere grounded in the familiar metaphors of domesticity and feminine virtue may well have been "the only viable political strategy for women". [164]

Having outlined the historical origins and features of the social purity movement, in Part Three of my thesis the identities of masculinity and femininity arising out of Hopkins' purity discourse will be critically analysed.

Part Three

DEFINING GENDER: CONSTRUCTIONS OF FEMININITY AND MASCULINITY IN THE WRITINGS OF ELLICE HOPKINS

CHAPTER 5:

"THE POWER OF WOMANHOOD": RELIGION, RESCUE WORK AND FEMALE SEXUALITY

5.1 DEFINING FEMALE SEXUALITY.

Hopkins' construction of female sexuality, or "womanhood" as she defined it, was heavily informed by her work among prostitutes and the response of surrounding social groups such as the Church and her middle-class female peers to these women. Her critique of traditional formulations of the Victorian feminine ideal manifested itself in practical and ideological terms. Thus the content of this chapter combines a discursive treatment of female sexuality with the relevant material aspects of rescue work administration and the role of the law. Following Linda Mahood, I will locate my examination of prostitution within a "problematization model", an approach which designates prostitution not as a strictly observational category, but as "an emerging label or censure".[1] This method is particularly salient when considering purity feminism's desire to identify and classify the shifting terrain of late-Victorian female sexuality. An empirical investigation of prostitution *per se* is not provided here, but rather an exploration of selected aspects of the way in which Hopkins' religiously inspired rescue work both reinforced and challenged existing class-based models of female sexual purity.[2]

To begin with, here is a poem published by Hopkins in 1899 reflecting upon the tragedy and distortion of the male-defined female experience:

A VISION OF WOMANHOOD

Out in the desert, half-submerged, a sphinx
Gazed at her awful mirrored loveliness,
In dull deep waters sunk of Lethe, fed
By the dark river of the unknown source;
Gazed at the pure high face that answered hers,
As moon to moon, and lovely moulded curves
Of motherhood that shaped the pure white breast,

And deemed she saw herself, nor knew
That just below the shining surfaces
The woman sickened into unclean beast,
Bestial, with ravening claws and murderous strength;
And all around were strewn the bones of men,
And eyeless sockets filled with desert dust
Of those who cursed with a dying curse.

Then a great Angel, standing in the sun,
Smote those dull Lethe-waters and they fled,
And all her hidden shame to her lay bare;
And in her agony she knew herself
To be half woman and half beast unclean,
That grew to her and made one shuddering flesh
With her, inextricably one with death.
And all her being burned as in a furnace,
And the cold stone was fused about her heart
Into warm blood and sweat of agony;
While men awe-stricken gazed upon her woe,
And every kingdom wailed because of her,
And all the land was darkened for her sake.
Then as one dead before her feet I fell,
Made one with her intolerable shame.[3]

"A Vision of Womanhood" is a compelling account of women's fragmented self-perception. The above quotation which comprises only the first two verses of the complete work indicate the overall purpose of the poem which was to highlight the damaging impact of dominant dualistic paradigms of female sexuality - "half woman and half beast unclean" - upon the female psyche. In its place, Hopkins proffered a new unified model of womanhood that sought to moderate the correlation of the prostitute and the half-submerged beast with its "ravening claws and murderous strength". In a gesture of gender solidarity, all women were "Made one with her intolerable shame".

It is a commonplace that Christian constructions of female sexuality have throughout history been largely organized around the virgin/whore dichotomy. In the nineteenth-century this division was expressed with unprecedented vigour, buttressed by a religio-medical alliance that juxtaposed domesticated feminine virtue over and against the prostitute as public symbol of female sexual depravity. Thomas Laqueur has argued that prior to 1800, men and women were viewed as equally sexualized beings. By the early nineteenth-century, a physiology of male/female incommensurability that had more to do with political agendas than new scientific discoveries, had sacrificed female sexual desire

to the exigencies of a changing social order.[4] The now "passionless" pious wife and mother, a crucial factor in the construction of the nascent Victorian industrial elite, was idealized by church and science alike.[5] In 1857, William Acton, a medical authority on venereology whose views are often regarded as representative of the period described the female sex as "not very much troubled with sexual feelings of any kind".[6] This was due in part to the demands of maternity which so affected women's reproductive organs that "sexual desire [was] almost annihilated".[7] But it was also reflective of the absolute sexual innocence of Acton's ideal woman who was "so pure-hearted as to be utterly ignorant of and averse to any sensual indulgence".[8] The absence of carnal desire was to be enshrined as the moral and somatic condition of true womanhood until the end of the century.

As "the embodiment of...corporeal smells and animal passions"[9] the prostitute represented the supreme affront to this spiritualized, sexless, "angel in the house".[10] Transgressor of the private sphere, her perceived sexual voraciousness violated all codes of female moral propriety and prompted responses of extreme hostility. Symbolic of the evils of social dislocation incumbent upon modern industrialized society, the prostitute was defined by Victorian commentators as a foreboding "meta-system"[11] of moral and religious sedition. In 1861 for example, an article in *The Magdalen's Friend* blamed the prostitute for "the dissolution of domestic ties...the sacrifice of family peace...but, above all...the growth of practical Atheism [sic]".[12] Acton's image of "pollutant of men"[13] exemplified the mid-century elision of prostitution and disease, in itself an influential recasting of the long-standing Christian interpretation of female sexuality as a source of filth and excrement. As Lynda Nead has pointed out in her book *Myths of Sexuality: Representations of Women in Victorian Britain* (1988), the particular threat of the prostitute was her fluid existence between classes. Through physical contact with her male clients she became the conduit of infection and disease from sewer to city, as represented by the rat disappearing into the drainpipe in Dante Gabriel Rossetti's popular *The Gate of Memory* (1857).[14]

Passive versus active sexuality, respectable versus fallen, pure versus impure - the binary oppositions which dominated orthodox accounts of female sexuality were to be found in every form of cultural representation from religious sermons to popular literature and art. This division enabled the churches to propagate the natural predisposition of women to religiosity whilst continuing to attribute the downfall of humanity to the Eve/woman symbol.[15] According to Hopkins, Christianity was at the very root of the dualistic model of the female sex. "Have you ever faced the awful thought - so infinitely pathetic, I should think, to men - that the outcast woman, as we see her now, is indirectly the creation of Christianity itself?"[16] There was nothing like her degradation in heathen countries, for it was the Christian religion's elevated model of womanhood that was simultaneously responsible for the downfall of the prostitute. "The higher standard involved the deeper fall, and its full degradation was recognised in...sinking the fallen woman to the lowest depths of shame and ignominy".[17]

5.2 RESCUE WORK AND ITS PRACTICAL ADMINISTRATION.

Late-Victorian rescue work was characterized by four main features - an emphasis on preventive work with young girls; a shift away from the workhouse milieu of larger institutions to smaller, friendlier homes; the increasing diversification and specialization of refuge projects, and the acceptance of greater state intervention. It would be difficult to locate any one of these developments outside of Hopkins' influence. Between 1866 and 1890 she dramatically redefined the objectives and methods of rescue work so that it came to focus on a permanent and preventive, as opposed to a criminalizing approach to prostitution. There is ample source material available for a far more comprehensive account of her rescue methods than has so far been provided by social historians such as Kathleen Heasman, Frank Prochaska, Edward Bristow and Michael Mason. I have drawn from many hitherto unexplored sources in this section, but as noted earlier, I consider only those aspects most pertinent to her overall construction of female sexuality. [18]

Hopkins' rescue impulse was defined and developed in stark contrast to existing penitential methods. Despite her High Church background, she held little regard for the practices of the CPA which had been the main ecclesiastical agency responsible for the promotion and co-ordination of Anglo-Catholic and Tractarian rescue initiatives since 1851. "Penitentiaries are doubtless necessary palliatives", she wrote in the *Plea,* "but...when advanced as a sole specific, the Church in so doing...tacitly acknowledges the necessity of prostitution, and contents herself with saving as many victims of a necessary evil as she can".[19] Harsh regimes of endless penance and sweated labour interspersed with physical abuses such as flogging, solitary incarceration and head-shaving seemed to Hopkins a crushing institutionalization of the sexual double standard and the dichotomous model of womanhood to which she was opposed.[20] In *Notes on Penitentiary Work* (1879), she argued that the rigorous moral ethos of the Anglo-Catholic asylums crystallized the spiritual and social division between pure and impure femininity by contrasting the inviolable piety of the sisters with the sinful depravity of the prostitute. In the name of Christian charity and the demands of rehabilitation statistics, the "hours of silence...frequent religious services [and] hours of toil unbroken"[21] deprived the wretched inmates of their very humanity. "The methods adopted may be so severe, the discipline so monotonously dull, with a view to what is called "subduing them", that they act as a sort of Darwinism - a 'natural selection' of girls so intensely in earnest that they would do well under any methods".[22]

Hopkins' attack on palliative principles of magdalenism reflected the late-Victorian shift away from remedial rescue of the experienced, hardened prostitute to preventive moral reform of the young. Why burden society with a host of homes, workhouses, prisons and hospitals to accommodate the results of evil she asked, while never striking at the causes? Her vision for a permanent eradication of prostitution aimed not to criminalize or incarcerate women, but to "save" them before they became entrenched in vice. The basic rescue scheme developed in Brighton consisted of making contact with unruly youngsters considered to be at risk and encouraging them to either return home to their parents or

enter a preventive training home that would equip them for a respectable position in domestic service or laundry work.

Visiting disorderly houses was an aspect of the work that caused many purity feminists great emotional stress. Verbal and physical abuse were very real hazards and rescue workers were often confronted by forceful resistance from the prostitutes. On her first visitation Hopkins inadvisedly asked a group of brothel-women to kneel and pray with her. Her request was met with ridicule and scorn. "The door had not been closed two seconds behind me...when I heard horrid shrieks of laughter...and fragments of indecent jests".[23] She remained convinced "that this was the right agency for reaching outcast women",[24] however. Brothel-visiting was a perfect example of female Christian discipleship and a chance to express "deep womanly compassions [and] the tender, human-hearted Christ in us".[25] It was also preventive work at its best - "working upon the forge and not merely upon the last link".[26] Ladies Association members visited "dens of infamy" in pairs for two hours a week, engaging in lengthy prayers before setting out. "Nothing short of our going personally among them, as our Lord Jesus Christ came personally among us, will prevail"[27] Hopkins argued. Aware of the high failure rate of midnight meetings where prostitutes were too drunk or too busy to listen, day-time visitations where women were more sober and reflective about their state were preferred. "Everything is real about them", she explained, "no glitter, no illusion, no self-deception, no excitement, but real misery, pain, remorse".[28] Brothel-visiting seems to have met with remarkable success in Brighton. According to Hopkins the local LACFG closed seven houses in a single street, and in one case the den-keeper herself remarked gratefully that until their visit "no Christian person had spoken to her for forty years".[29]

Once admitted to the refuge, probationers were kept in separate accommodation for three or four months before joining the main training home. Against the dehumanizing penitentiary regimes, Hopkins implemented a family-based structure in cottages or small houses "holding twelve girls, the mother-matron, and laundry maid".[30] They were

visited regularly by LACFG members and supervised wherever possible by "a clergyman and his wife together" [31] so as to maintain the essential principle of family life. Staff members were recruited from earnest Christian women "not too far removed from the girls in rank".[32] Adamant that only the sin and not the sinner should be punished, she encouraged a warm, cheerful atmosphere within the training homes and the provision of a garden wherever possible. "In not making life as bright as we can for the girls, we punish not their sin" she observed, "but their penitence; we make them feel that that service which in church we call 'perfect freedom' is a gloomy slavery".[33] A comparatively healthy diet was provided and plenty of physical exercise, generally consisting of long country rambles, was used instead of solitary confinement as an antidote to disruptive behaviour. There was no uniform, but clothing clubs run by the LACFGs provided walking-out dresses, with other requirements deducted from the girls' wages earned in the home. Regular periods of relaxation also formed part of the daily routine.[34]

5.2.i. Rescue work as resocialization.

Historians such as Linda Mahood and Carol Dyhouse have argued that nineteenth-century rescue work, whether palliative or preventive, was comprised of "deliberate agencies for re-making working-class culture".[35] According to Mahood's theory of "intensive resocialization", refuges and asylums of all denominations isolated the "problematic" segments of the urban female poor through confinement and restored them to social respectability through "voluntary" social-control strategies such as moral education, industrial training, emigration or diversion to other institutions.[36] Hopkins' rationale for her training homes as producers of an effective, well-trained industrial workforce exemplified the resocialization process. "We have no intention of sinking into a mere rescue society" she wrote in 1878. "We spend millions a-year in making good soldiers out of rough lads; why not spend a few thouands a-year in making good servants out of our rough girls?"[37] The LACFG made explicit its preparedness to deal only with the worst type of young girl whose limited opportunities of employment were certain to

lead them straight into the brothel.[38]

As the two forms of employment that most adhered to the values of the private female sphere in terms of cleanliness and domesticity, laundry-work and domestic service were the staple forms of training in most homes. The labour-intensive laundry was recommended for newcomers to the Albion Hill Home as a means of staving off any initial restlessness but, as Mahood has suggested, laundry-work may have also served an important symbolic function for the girls as a daily "cleansing ritual".[39] Candidates considered suitable for domestic service, particularly in upper-class households, were given additional training as "first-rate needlewomen and machinists".[40]

Organized religion functioned to shore up the variety of social-control strategies in this process and facilitate conformity to middle-class ideals of feminine propriety. Biblical instruction and regular devotions were considered essential to the moral welfare of the girls. Hopkins eschewed the obscurity of ecclesiastical intercessions and "archaic" Gregorian chants used by the penitentiaries in favour of a sober informality of worship which included hymns by Moody and Sankey and vernacular prayers.[41] Religious conversion was involved throughout the entire spectrum of the Anglican rescue programme. Unlike the remedial emphasis upon reform of the individual soul, however, the balance between spiritual and social reclamation was more delicately balanced in the preventive approach. Hopkins placed less stress on continuous penance and more on social rehabilitation, reflecting her greater optimism concerning the potential reformability of the "fallen woman". This was obviously helped by the younger age-group of her charges. Most purity workers were prepared to distinguish between those who had trangressed for the first time and were willing to change, and those who were "hardened in vice".[42] As Elizabeth Blackwell advised, "the tenderest compassion may be shown to the poor creature who ceases to be a prostitute;...but do nothing to raise the condition of prostitutes as such, any more than you would try to improve the condition of murderers and thieves".[43]

There is evidence to suggest that Hopkins, in accordance with her rejection of the inherent depravity of human sexuality, took a more conciliatory line over the distinction between the reclaimable and unreclaimable subject. In *Saved at Last !* (1885) she berated the "Pharisaic Christian" who believed that once fallen, "the temple could never be raised up again".[44] Without undermining the very real effort required on the part of the rescue worker, which in her case-study of the recalcitrant prostitute Mary took eight years of prayer and letter-writing, she maintained that all fallen women were ultimately redeemable.[45] Not only was it manifestly wrong to make an "artificial distinction between this and all other sins",[46] unlike Blackwell it seems, Hopkins placed no category of womanhood beyond Christ's salvific power.

As Mahood has pointed out, it was perhaps the disruption of existing family ties that constituted the homes' most effective means of controlling and domesticating their young inmates.[47] Hopkins' moral environmentalism analyzed prostitution in terms of bad home surroundings and poor upbringing. She consequently saw the main function of a refuge as the practical supply of all those conditions necessary for the full moral, physical and vocational development of the girls that were lacking in their own backgrounds. Convinced as she was that most of them had never known a "real mother's love" [48] or had been deprived of responsible parental care at a very early age, she envisaged the training home as a substitute family. Girls were subsequently discouraged from contacting relatives whilst in the refuge and often advised to sever all links with their past, taking instead their image of "refined, feminine behaviour" [49] from the moral purity of their surrogate mothers.

To what extent Hopkins' method provided a fundamental shift in Victorian rescue work is debatable. In *The Making of Victorian Sexual Attitudes* (1994), Michael Mason has suggested that despite the shift in rhetoric, the continued presence of themes such as selection and confinement tend to indicate "a persistence of fundamental aims and attitudes"[50] towards the prostitute throughout the nineteenth-century.

> Could it be that the new wave of 'homes' and 'cottages', which made much of the flexibility of the...period of stay...the relinquishing of uniform, and...the introduction of recreations, concealed an iron fist of humiliation in the new-fangled velvet glove of kindliness?[51]

Mason overstates the point here. But his underlying premise that different means may well have ultimately served the same end is largely correct. The overarching principle of voluntary incarceration as a means to rehabilitating fallen women remained in place throughout the century, fraught with all the ambiguities of class-based and religious sanctions. Positive achievements were made and it would be wrong to underestimate Hopkins' genuine attempts to alter the punitive tone of the larger penitential homes. A keen advocate of rehabilitation within the community, her efforts at boarding girls out for training with Christian families might have mounted a direct challenge to the principle of confinement, but it proved too costly. Another scheme, to include nursing on the training home's agenda, was similarly abandoned due to lack of financial support.[52] Frustrated in some of her more adventurous projects by insufficient funding and an LACFG membership more cautious in its approach than the impulse of her leadership was able to overcome, Hopkins' rescue methods were unavoidably curtailed by the limitations of day-to-day implementation. [53]

Her theory was considerably more radical as, through a more ameliorative form of rescue she undermined the rigid distinction between prostitute and reformer, fallen and redeemed. She urged her members to "treat [the prostitute] and act towards her, and feel towards her, as a sister".[54] In terms of the dichotomous model of female sexuality, the standard of moral purity remained absolute, but the gap between pure and impure was appreciably shortened. Central to this was the discourse of the prostitute as a tragic victim.

5.3 LATE-VICTORIAN DISCOURSES OF PROSTITUTION.

Lynda Nead has identified two dominant juxtaposed images of the Victorian prostitute from a multiplicity of authoritative discourses - the social threat, female agent of contagion, chaos and disorder - and the social victim, a pitiful outcast betrayed by male seduction.[55] Both of these images occurred in Hopkins' writing. She drew upon the metaphor of contagion most obviously in her declarations that rescue work had turned her from a "singing bird" into a "sewer rat",[56] and in her concern over sexually transmitted diseases and the degenerating health of the nation.[57] Overwhelmingly though, her discourse on prostitution deployed with consummate skill that essentially Victorian narrative of female seduction which, from the publication of works such as Mrs Gaskell's *Ruth* in 1853, had earned increasing sympathy for the prostitute as tragic social victim. Described by Mason as "one of the most rhapsodically magdalenist voices"[58] of the period, Hopkins was an accomplished exponent of the "cult of sentimentality"[59] which surrounded the prostitute during the latter half of the century. Her use of the popular "seduction to suicide"[60] genre functioned as an emotive counter-argument to Acton's influential depiction of the witting, robust and self-defined prostitute. In a powerful blend of squalor and pathos, Hopkins sought to convince her audience of the tragedy of the prostitute's existence. They emerged as haunted martyrs of sexual purity, "clad in shameful rags"[61] and full of self-condemnation. For many outcast women she contended, the knowledge of their own subhuman and defeminized existence was too much. Against the Actonian "happy, healthy harlot",[62] she told of those who took "the dread leap out of your 'jolly life'"[63] into the black, poisoned waters beneath Suicides' Bridge.

Limited by their own ideological horizons of femininity, purity reformers were unable and unwilling to comprehend prostitution as anything other than a tragedy of unrequited love, or the last resort of a desperate woman driven to feed herself and her starving children. As Judith Walkowitz and others have ably demonstrated, little resemblance to reality occurred in such accounts.[64] Few prostitutes conformed to the philanthropist's

picture of the defenceless victim. Prostitution was above all a rational choice for working women amidst an exploitative economic structure, a "voluntary and gradual"[65] supplement to other forms of employment typical of the fluid sexual mores of working-class communities. Historians have commonly attributed reformers' distorted perceptions to a combination of factors. These have included class and religious affiliations and the pragmatic character of philanthropy which, even during the late-Victorian decades consisted largely of "short-term practical solutions to immediate problems".[66] Despite a growing willingness to acknowledge social factors as a catalyst to sexual immorality, the goal of many rescue workers remained the salvation of souls. A fervour for individual conversion was insufficient to challenge the socio-economic reality of the urban poor in any fundamental sense. As Prochaska has argued, "even advanced charitable women had only a vague notion of society's economic organization and little knowledge of social theory".[67]

Hopkins wrote lucidly on occasions of the economic hardships faced by working-class girls, the unstable employment conditions of seasonal work and "the starvation women's wage".[68] She acknowledged female poverty as a direct result of labour discrimination and even rationalized the brothel as an understandable option under such conditions, wondering not at a prostitute's "miserable frailty which succumbs to such cruel bribes",[69] but that so many resisted so often:

> That poor woman, with ill-paid woman's labour, making ulsters that sell at 7s 11d for 2d, ...or that shop-girl who at the most gets from 5s to 12s a-week to lodge, clothe and board herself on; whose fault is it that men have taught her that she can make her two and three pounds a-week by selling the sanctities of her own womanhood;...by stitching her own shroud....Is it for you men, who can compel a fair wage for your work, to sit in judgment on her? [70]

Demonstrating a not insignificant level of comprehension regarding the economic reasons for prostitution, Hopkins failed to follow through with any radical or long-term

constructive social analysis. This was due in part to the exigencies of middle-class philanthropy and her religious conviction of the need for individual transformation in the ushering in of a divine moral order. More significantly, however, a comprehensive socio-economic vision of renewal was not her primary objective. Rather, as a religious feminist, her discursive deployment of the tragic outcast figure served a series of practical, theological and gender-based strategies of more immediate concern.

5.3.i. The prostitute as victim - a theological agenda.

Presenting the prostitute as "a worthy object of charity and compassion"[71] helped revitalize a flagging rescue movement by dispelling public censure and fear, and replacing it with a sympathetic social conscience. The image of a wretched outcast was far more likely to enhance fund-raising and recruitment prospects. It also promoted the activities of female rescue workers and endowed them with greater collective moral power. The religious derivation of the term "magdalenism" from the familiar image of the penitent, fallen Mary Magdalene of the gospels, meant that there was ample scope for theological reflection in the discourse of prostitution.[72] Imaging prostitutes as unfortunate victims of seduction implied an adherence to highly orthodox constructions of female sexuality. In terms of a theological agenda, the concept of the "fallen woman" connoted original moral respectability and innocent female virtue, women who having succumbed to temptation were now haunted by memories of lost purity. Hopkins' graphic descriptions of the prostitute's disfigured appearance are heavily symbolic of a moral and physical alienation from "true womanhood". Torn and bleeding feet, matted hair, body "blistered and blackened"[73] by life on the streets all indicated to the reader that the "last traces of a woman seem to have faded".[74] According to many rescue workers' model of sexual redemption, the unrepentant prostitute posed something of an insurmountable problem. The motif of innocent victim enabled reformers in discursive terms at least, to reclaim the pitiful, ostracized magdalen back into the fold of pious femininity. Many, like Josephine Butler, projected this striking female redemption/salvation melodrama in terms of a climactic death-scene.[75] As Walkowitz notes, "like Gaskell's *Ruth,* Butler's

magdalens all died in a state of grace, having acquired spiritual insight and potency from their fall".[76] Nead has remarked that this technique reflected the evangelical tendency to look to the hereafter as a compensatory solace for the prostitute's harsh trials, comfortably removing "any responsibility or guilt from respectable society".[77] It could also be argued that the death of the redeemed prostitute allowed women rescue workers to circumvent having to formulate the full theological and social ramifications of a redeemed Eve-figure.

Hopkins' account addresses these theological difficulties head-on. She also presents the fallen woman as "closer to Christ for having sinned and been redeemed".[78] Yet she is more concerned to demonstrate passionate discipleship than saintly Madonna-like death as the final destiny of the prostitute. Her use of above and below ground symbolism (with its obvious connotations of the hellish reality of an immoral existence) and of metaphors of light and darkness, portray the prostitute engaged in a supernatural struggle with the forces of good and evil.[79] Through the explicitly religious metaphors of temptation, fall, guilt and repentance, she traced the apotheosis of the young prostitute from a degraded, wretched creature into an inspirational figure of Christian service. Thus, the redemptive aspect of the magdalen's odyssey in Hopkins' account comes not through death, but through a life of active social contribution to her own community - through marriage, motherhood or acceptance as a communicating member of the Church.[80] In *Saved at Last!* the prostitute is depicted as a prodigal daughter returning home penitently but joyfully to her family. The comparison is underlined by the direct use of the Lukan text.

> ...made reckless by misery, she sank lower and lower, till at last, more than ever perishing with hunger, loathing the swine's food and the swine's company of her degradation, the divine voice was heard in her heart, "I will arise and go unto my Father, and will say Father, I have sinned".[81]

This feminist appropriation of the parable of the prodigal son alerts us to a deeper interpretative level of the theological significance of the prostitute. She is, as already stated, a metaphor for the redeemability of all sexually trangressing women, in itself a radical reverse discourse of Eve as the primary cause of original sin. As prodigal daughter/son the prostitute also becomes the central symbol of human, as opposed to merely female fallenness. Thus, Hopkins' image of her female victim was not inspired by mere superficial sentimental piety, but a deep compassion for lost humanity. As the ultimate threat of contagion and immorality and the scapegoat for all the evils of the modern industrial order, the prostitute became the paradigm of human alienation from God. She was, in Hopkins' words, "a bowed and ignoble figure on whom the sins of us all seem to have met, the self-righteousness of the Church as well as the wild passions of men".[82] In *The Defaced Image Restored* (n.d.) she described the way in which the divine image had become hideously deformed in the prostitute, yet was still eternally restorable through "the fire that never can be quenched, the love of God that can never cease to burn".[83] As the theological symbol of human fallenness and depravity, the prostitute was simultaneously the discursive location of the fully inclusive truth of salvation, that "every man and woman is made in the image of God".[84]

5.3.ii The prostitute as victim - a feminist agenda.

The sub-text of the assertion that female sexual proclivity was no impediment to either the spiritual salvation or the full social restoration of the prostitute had a radical feminist cutting edge. According to Hopkins, it was *male* sexual depravity that required moral reorientation. One of the strongest feminists currents in her writing was in the portrayal of a sexual system where men were depicted unequivocally as the sexual aggressors and perpetrators of the moral destitution of women. In her 1883 pamphlet *The Ride of Death* she depicted an apocalyptic scene in which "a great multitude" of women were standing at "the dark river of death...into which they are being pushed and hastened".

> Close upon them come the enemy - disease, degradation, curses, drink, despair...And who has driven them into that position? Men; men who ought

> to have protected them instead of degrading them; men, who have taken advantage of a woman's weakness to gratify their own selfish pleasure.[85]

As "damaged pearls cast before the swine of privileged male lust",[86] the only sin committed by the unfortunate daughters of the respectable working poor was a "generous longing to give themselves to the man they loved best",[87] borne out of naive exuberance and youthful vitality. Having been deprived of their self-respect and good character by male seduction, the pretty shop-girl, servant-girl, or young seamstress, found herself thrust down "the dread winding stair" of "deepening degradation"[88] into drunkenness, obscenity and utter ruin. These melodramatic narratives of sexual danger were a blatant infantilization of the sexual agency of working-girls and women, denying them any powers of active choice or autonomy. But they also evinced clear feminist political objectives. In addition to exposing the moral bankruptcy of the sexual double standard, Hopkins discredited male sexual power in the minds of her readership through the creation of a climate of intense male guilt and moral inferiority. Like Butler, she deployed the narrative of innocent female suffering in order to invert the theme of the prostitute as "evil pollutant of society" to "victim of male pollution".[89] In this way she aimed to gain public support for the degraded prostitute and in the process disempower the abusive sexual dominance of men.

> And again I ask, with whom does the blame lie? With the bribed or the briber?....Ay, I know well that it is the woman who often tempts; these poor creatures must tempt or starve. But that does not touch the broad issue, that it is men who endow the degradation of women; it is men who, making the demand, create the supply. Stop the money of men and the whole thing would be starved out in six weeks time.[90]

In positing men as the sexual trangressors of women, feminists successfully "subverted the notion of Eve's role in original sin"[91] and replaced it with a theological narrative whereby men became responsible for the fallen state of human nature. For a religious feminist like Hopkins such a theory was of enormous potency. In the following section I

show how she carried her defamation of aggressive male sexuality over into the legal arena, turning a traditionally masculine apparatus against its own creators.

5.4 HOPKINS AND THE LAW.

Looking back over 40 years of campaigning, Hopkins summarized her efforts in terms of its two legislative victories, the ISA Act and the CLA Act. These, she asserted had done more than anything else to elevate public moral opinion.[92] Purity feminism's increasing confidence in the legal system and their alliance with state intervention has proved a controversial aspect of their activity for historians. Preparedness to contemplate more coercive methods of vice control such as the enlarged powers of police surveillance and forcible suppression of brothels sanctioned by the CLA Act, has been viewed with suspicion by first and second-wave feminists alike.[93] As mentioned in Chapter 4, purity reformers' concept of the state as a primary vehicle for moral improvement represented a dramatic shift away from previous libertarian reform impulses. Repeal veterans such as Butler and Elizabeth Wolstenholme Elmy became increasingly concerned throughout the 1880s at the emergence of repressionist tendencies amongst their colleagues. While initially supportive of sections of the CLA Act, namely the age of consent legislation, the libertarian feminist Personal Rights Association (PRA) also expressed anxiety about the "lack of prudence and justice" [94] with which it was being implemented. As Butler wrote to Mary Priestman in 1894 after Ormiston Chant's attack on the music-halls:

> I tried hard to keep out of the "Empire" conflict...I continue to protest that I do not believe that any real reform will ever be reached by outward repression...[L]et individuals alone, not...pursue them with any outward punishment, nor drive them out of any place, so long as they behave decently.[95]

Disquiet at the eviction of prostitutes from the brothel onto the street and the far more hazardous trade of public solicitation led the PRA to excoriate NVA members as "vigilant

stampers upon the feeble".[96] In a telling comparison of the NVA's efforts with state regulation, Wolstenholme Elmy observed that "in the name of...social purity our mistaken friends will have brought us back to that cruel oppression of women which they denounced and resisted when enforced in the alleged interests of the public health".[97] By the late 1890s, Butler had withdrawn her marginal support for the NVA and was warning colleagues to "Beware of 'Purity Societies'".[98]

Historians have subsequently confirmed that the pressure of prosecution upon brothel-owners brought by purity campaigners did indeed lead to the dislocation of women from the female-controlled brothel to the male-controlled trade of pimping and street-solicitation.[99]A dichotomized model of nineteenth-century feminist sexual political discourse has subsequently emerged, pivoting upon women's differing attitudes to legislative intervention. Amongst others, Deborah Gorham has juxtaposed the civil libertarians' enshrinement of the individual rights of the prostitute against that of the purity reformers, whose moral righteousness "led them to a belief that evil had to be abolished, by compulsion if necessary".[100]

Hopkins' instrumental involvement in the passage of the ISA Act provides a useful case-study of the tensions between competing feminist strategies in relation to the role of the law. The 1880 amendment to Section XIV of the original Act extended the specification of minors (under 14 years) who qualified for commitment to a certified industrial school, to include children "growing up in the company of depraved or disorderly persons, or prostitutes, or frequenting their company".[101] This amendment, which legislated for the compulsory removal of such children from their "injurious custody" [102] to a certified Home or School became known as the "Ellice Hopkins' Act". It received the warm support of Archbishop Tait and Lord Shaftesbury and "passed both Houses without a division".[103] Conversely, Hopkins' involvement with this legislative development earned her fierce criticism from Wolstenholme Elmy and the PRA. What Hopkins regarded as essential for "the moral salvation of thousands of little girls",[104] was

viewed by the *Journal of the Vigilance Association for the Defence of Personal Rights* (JDPR) as an erosion of prostitutes' civil liberties vis-a-vis the denial of their maternal and familial rights. They satirized Hopkins as "a well-meaning woman who devoted her life to having little girls snatched away from their parents, shut up from all real and practical life...and then turned out into the world...with the family ties and affections...weakened or destroyed".[105] Throughout 1881, the JDPR carried leading articles denouncing the callousness and brutality with which this ominous extension of state power was being applied. According to its editor Wolstenholme Elmy, repressive police tactics and the instantaneous estrangement of teenage girls from their own home community, often without prior notification of the parents, amounted to little more than "wholesale kidnapping".[106] In a later pamphlet entitled *Drawn Unto Death, a plea for the children coming under the Industrial Schools Act Amendment Act* (1884) Hopkins defended herself against such "unnecessary personal asperity".[107] She admitted to certain "grave defects" in the *modus operandi* of the Act, but refused to concede its intent as either repressive, or an infringement of personal liberty.

5.4.i. Purity interpretations of liberty and law.

In seeking to interpret Hopkins' advocacy of these measures, we need first to comprehend her concepts of "liberty" and "law". When Butler wrote in 1896 that "few poeple care for liberty or personal rights now",[108] she had in mind the liberty of the subject, in this case the prostitute woman, which included freedom from personal harrassment. For Hopkins, the concept of liberty required a more delicate balance between individual rights and the common good. Liberty was not a simple question of "doing as you please", for it had "its duties as well as its rights".[109] Her definition of freedom rejected the *laissez-faire* approach of the ruling classes, as exemplified by the moral apathy of the Church, to "let a man do whatever he chooses".[110] Instead she proposed a concept of liberty defined by the intelligent artisan classes - that of "equal power possessed by all...to impose restraints on all others for the good of all".[111] Prostitution and sexual vice constituted a sin against the community, an infringement of

the liberty of respectable working men and women. Only by removing the source of that vice could the wider community be fully transformed. "We must use the same common-sense methods against prostitution as...against vagrancy and theft", she wrote to Dr. Barnardo, bringing "the whole force of our educational and reformatory machinery against it, recognising it as a crime against the community". [112]

Hopkins' subjection of individual behavioural rights to the good of the community at large was informed by a definition of purity which, as noted in Chapter 4, exuded a fundamental antipathy to what Bishop Westcott described as the "tyrannical individualism"[113] of conventional Christian thought. Her critique of ecclesiastical "self-absorption" with personal sin and advocacy of a social Christian conscience echoed the philosophical theories of T. H. Green, who taught that no individual could fully realize their own existential ideal without reference to a sufficiently favourable environment.[114] The uncurtailed practice of vice maintained bondage to an unjust lifestyle for the prostitute and the community alike, restricting not only the liberty of the subject, but those around her. Purity feminists like Hopkins, Blackwell, Fawcett and Ormiston Chant argued that the freedom to sin was no freedom at all. Liberty for the prostitute and the local community was the cessation of vice, not its continuation. As Ormiston Chant wrote in 1902:

> A great deal of well-meant nonsense is talked about 'the liberty of the subject', whenever there is...effort to clear the streets. Some good people seem to be so zealous in defending the vicious from injustice that it seems as if they were in danger of forgetting that vice is in itself a colossal injustice, an infringement of the liberty of the subject.[115]

To polarize feminist sexual politics in terms of the liberty of the individual and the repression of vice as Gorham does, fails to comprehend the complex relationship between these two poles in purity feminism's thinking. Contrary to historical interpretations, Hopkins did not negate the rights of the prostitute in favour of a

depersonalized reformation of society, but argued that individual *and* social transformation were predicated upon each other. As a moral paradigm, she cited Christ's encounter with the woman of Samaria where he had shown that "no amount of sin and degradation could forfeit the right to personal consideration", and, "Who, while redeeming the race, always dealt with the individual heart and conscience".[116]

As Frank Mort has commented, Hopkins' concept of the law was typical of the new purity intellectual whose organic view of society regarded state intervention as "designed to promote healthy functioning of the body politic as an integrated totality".[117] As the "moral thermometer"[118] of the nation, the law represented the primary agent for the purification of society and the ushering in of God's kingdom on earth. In an exchange of letters with Frank Crossley, she described as lamentable the Evangelicals' other-worldly attitude which disdained human laws as of little import to the "higher" spiritual lessons of the Christian faith.[119] The Church had a moral duty to lead in the creation of a more just and moral society. This necessitated Christian involvement in the temporal workings of the law so that women and men might be brought into full realization of the divine plan. As with most moral reformers, Hopkins viewed the function of the law as pedagogical not punitive, laying the foundation of a higher social morality by educating the public "to a sense of righteousness [and] a conviction of sin".[120] The "law is still the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ" she wrote to Crossley, "whether the inward law of conscience or that outward law embodied by the community in its righteous enactments".[121]

5.4.ii Law and the protection of women.

Much of purity feminism's commitment to legislation was prompted by an attitude of protective custodianship. In raising the age of consent from 13 to 16 years, the CLA Act had enshrined the primacy of female sexual protection by enforcing better standards of moral behaviour upon men, argued Hopkins. "We are told *ad nauseam* that we cannot make men moral by Act of parliament. The CLA Act was an attempt not to make men moral, but to protect the young from becoming the victims of their immorality".[122] Prior

to this, no law had existed against harbouring a child over 13 in a brothel, as long as that child had not been forcibly abducted from parental care. For the majority of working-class girls, already out of the home and in employment by this age, the law against abduction was "practically inoperable".[123] The "legitimate province of the law"[124] was to protect these girls from the immaturity of their own instincts and from male miscreants.

> ...we are bound to protect the young from all attempts to lead them into a dissolute life before they are old enough to know the consequences of their actions and protect themselves....The first imperative duty of every community...is to say with authoritative command to the vicious adult: 'Hands off our Children! and to punish, with the utmost severity, the corruption of minors.[125]

Hopkins' fury against those men who defiled "a little child clothed in its helpless innocence" was unreserved. Her accusations of "child-devourers"[126] were tantamount to today's equivalent of paedophilia. "Men who injure the miserable children of twelve, and nine, and even five" she declared, should be kicked out of England "into the bottomless pit to which they belong".[127] Her desire to protect the young was such that no measure was considered too extreme, including the endorsement of the criminalization of "unnatural parents" [128] who, in encouraging their children into the brothel deserved to be deprived of "the rights they have so fearfully abused".[129]

Hopkins' faith in the competency of the law to effect moral change was tempered by an astute critique of its gender and class-based limitations. In *England's Law for Women and Children* (1883), she argued that the severity of laws relating to the protection of property compared with the non-existence of those relating to the protection of the moral personality had much to say about the patriarchal, classist nature of the English legislature.[130] It was only as a result of the "more democratic elements"[131] entering into political life, by which she meant the increasing visibility of women, that the privileged

status of male legislators had begun to acknowledge that "the incidence of the law must be made to press equally on men and women alike".[132]

Her confidence in the power of women's incipient legal activity was not unfounded. As Patricia Hollis has shown in her *Ladies Elect: Women in English Local Government 1865-1914* (1987), women had become a significant force in local government by the 1880s, shaping education and Poor Law policies. An impressive showing was made in a very short space of time. According to Philippa Levine, by the end of the century there were "around 1000 Poor Law Guardians, more than 200 women members of School Boards and about 200 women parish councillors".[133] Bland has suggested a demonstrable overlap between this enthusiastic undertaking of local civic activity and the social purity campaigns, arguing that purity feminism's preparedness to work through legal apparatus should be considered within this broader context of women's entry into local politics.[134] At a time when the prospect of national representation was "supposedly in the offing",[135] it was not surprising that many women's suspicion of state intervention was beginning to wane.

Hopkins was adamant that women should remain a decisive presence in the legal arena, influencing those instruments of state which most determined new codes of sexual and moral conduct. Although the law had shown itself through the ISA and CLA Acts to be an adequate vehicle for the circumscribing and controlling of male power, as a fundamentally patriarchal institution where "the interests of women and children were of no account",[136] it required ongoing female guidance. Purity feminism's involvement with the criminal legislature was thus the most effective way to disrupt the hegemony of male power.

5.5 MORAL WELFARE TRAINING.

A main feature of Hopkins' purity campaign was the dissemination of moral educative

literature amongst clergy wives, district visitors and LACFG members for use with working mothers and their families. As noted in Chapter 4, attempts by purists to raise levels of sexual respectability in the lives of the poorer classes were often predicated upon moral environmentalist theories. These related overcrowded and insanitary living conditions directly to the dangers of sexual immorality, most particularly that of incest. The didactic pamphlets *Village Morality,* and *On the Early Training of Boys and Girls - an appeal to working women* written in 1882, were salient examples of this correlation. *Village Morality* was a response to queries for help from respectable Christian women surrounded by seemingly epidemic proportions of rural promiscuity.[137] Hopkins advised immediate surveillance of the area's most likely trouble-spots, including close supervision of after-school leisure activities, Sunday School trips and choir excursions. She also suggested keeping "a watchful eye on the hay-fields and harvest-fields at meal-times".[138] She placed greatest emphasis upon a systematic survey of the sleeping arrangements of local families, particularly those of "not very high character".[139] Numbers of bedrooms and lodgers were to be checked and where necessary, the condition of the cottage reported to the landlord and pressure brought to bear for improvements. In the case of overcrowded accommodation, makeshift curtains, screens or hammocks were to be provided for the sake of personal modesty and to avoid further temptation. "Whilst there is this herding together at night, bad habits and indecent play between boys and girls, low morality and illegitimacy between young men and women is a necessary consequence".[140]

Despite her repeated injunctions to purity workers to avoid a "self-righteous, interfering spirit",[141] the class tensions and undeniable element of protective surveillance displayed in Hopkins' pedagogical relationship with working women demonstrate that she was unable to fully escape the custodial benevolence attached to the philanthropic role. "Just think of me as the woman who gave up everything to save you girls from their worst dangers" she wrote:

> Dear sisters there is not one of us ladies...who won't tell you that we have

> learnt our most precious lessons of faith...and patience, and self-sacrifice...under trials from you. But on the other hand, our large houses, our separate bedrooms, our greater education, make us...more particular in our ways than you - make us feel the importance of...little decent ways, little safeguards, and the little constant watchfulnesses in bringing up our children, which the terrible struggle for space but too often make you forget and grow careless about.[142]

It is difficult to assess the response of working-women to such a message, except to note its diverse forms. Prostitutes may have been dismissive of rescue workers' attempts to reform their lifestyles, but on her lecturing tours Hopkins records crowds of poor mothers grateful for her words and eager to shake her hand.[143] Dominant historical consensus has appraised purity reform in terms of a disciplinary and regulatory class-based offensive against the sexual habits of the poor. The slippage from protective surveillance into repression was certainly an easy one. According to Gorham, discontinuities between late-Victorian middle-class ideologies of adolescence and the social reality of working-class childhood meant that "only rarely did the reformers' arguments involve any consideration of the actual sexual development of the girls who were their concern".[144] The economic and social independence of young working-girls violated respectable norms of passive, dependent female adolescence. Thus for many purity workers, the protective instinct could all too easily mask more coercive intentions in the regulation of young girls' voluntary sexual impulses.

As Jane Lewis has argued of late-nineteenth century social work, the theory and practice of purity feminism was considerably more complex than "the simple idea of 'women controlling women' would suggest".[145] The historical debate over whether moral reformers sought to regulate or empower poor urban women is not so much an issue of either/or, as both/and. Concealed within the rhetoric of regulation and surveillance was a genuine desire to educate and inform women so as to provide greater autonomy of action. Encouraging mothers of all classes to take responsibility for the moral and sexual education of their children was a key factor in this approach.

5.6 SEX EDUCATION AND THE DEMISE OF FEMALE INNOCENCE.

I have referred throughout my thesis to Hopkins' positive interpretation of purity and desire to speak out openly on issues of sexual morality. A natural corollary of this approach and one that would have radical implications for her construction of female sexuality, was the attempt to rouse women "to face the facts about their own womanhood".[146] Sex education for boys was not new, consisting primarily of exhortations to chastity and self-control of which more will be said in Chapter 6. Up until the 1880s sexual ignorance was considered essential to female moral purity, however, and a main aspect of women's protection against immorality. But as Hopkins commented in a surprisingly postmodern vein, knowledge was power - "one could not expect virtue without knowledge".[147] The purity of Christ, she wrote in 1884, "was not the purity of ignorance that leaves others to perish, but the purity of knowledge that knows in order to save".[148] The old order had changed and in the present state of affairs it was no longer possible to preserve a female morality based upon sexual ingenuousness. Echoing and subverting Ruskin's feminine ideal, she wrote:

> We do not want our garden lilies to smell of anything but pure dews and rains and sun-warmed fragrances. But is this ideal possible any longer, except in a few secluded country homes, where...they may remain innocent and ignorant of the world's evil?....with the greater freedom accorded to women, the wider range of education...of reading, with modern newspapers left about, I ask, How is it possible for a mother to keep her girls in ignorance and unconscious innocence ? [149]

As Hopkins' final question suggests, whether across the boundaries of class or generation, educating for sex was perceived by her as a distinctively female task. The role of the mother was emphasised in all feminist sex education manuals. From Blackwell's pioneering *Counsel to Parents on the Moral Education of their Children in Relation to Sex* (1878) to the radical feminist Wolstenholme Elmy's *The Human Flower* (1892) written for younger children, mothers were attributed with primary responsibility for the physiological awareness of their daughters and sons.[150] Giving mothers, not fathers,

"the right to control sexual access to their daughters"[151] was, as Walkowitz has commented, a direct subversion of patriarchal authority. Hopkins certainly depicted motherhood as a highly politicized activity in this matter. No woman could take a "neutral attitude"[152] in the sex education of her sons for fear of perpetuating negative attitudes towards women. Thus, middle-class mothers were encouraged to impress upon their sons the real truth about sex and a respect for womanhood before they disappeared off to public-school. In such institutions she remarked, boys were sure to pick up "crude and often ridiculously false notions of life".[153]

Mothers were also responsible for the wider dissemination of sex education material. Hopkins last two books, *The Power of Womanhood* and *The Story of Life* were both banned from the circulating libraries because of their frank information on reproduction and the origins of life. This was something of a historical irony in the light of the censorship powers used by the purity movement itself.[154] In the introduction to *The Power of Womanhood* she urged mothers to circulate the book amongst themselves, dismissing the qualms of the more reticent by replying, "If they are not too young to be the mothers of boys, they are not too young to know how to fulfil the responsibility inherent in such motherhood".[155]

Like most writers on human physiology at the time, Hopkins made use of evolutionary biology to stress the sacredness of the origins of life. Her account of childbirth began with a description of reproduction in plants where the baby seed lay "in a soft downy place...in the pod of the parent plant" [156] until ripe. Moving up the evolutionary scale she explained how the egg was "carried in the mother bird's body...till the chick is strong enough to break the walls of its tiny house".[157] It was the same in human life she concluded:

> ...the baby comes in just the same way so far as its infant body is concerned, growing...from a tiny cell - borne by the mother till all the organs are formed which it needs for its earthly life, when it is also born

> and laid in its mothers' arms, to be nourished and cared for by the love of both father and mother.[158]

On the more sensitive subject of reproductive sex, Hopkins advised mothers to begin with basic organisms like amoeba and progress to more complex biological forms. A range of plants, bees, fish and bird-life could be explored in order to explain the fertilization process of the female egg by the male spermatozoa. Then, having reached the human anatomy, "as you have already explained the physical facts of life and birth on the plane of plants and ants and bees" she wrote, "you will have no need to go over it again, but will find yourself free to express the physical in terms of the moral".[159] Although Hopkins' discussion of the human sexual act was considerably more elliptical, as I will show in Chapter 7, this did not detract from the revolutionary nature of her overall objective in the formation of a knowledgeable, self-aware construction of female sexuality.

Both Bland and Mort have argued correctly that late nineteenth-century sex education was concerned more with the dangers than the pleasures of sex.[160] Women were cautioned mainly about the perils of ill-informed encounters with men. Hopkins' moral welfare literature advising working-mothers against letting children of both sexes bathe and sleep together and preventing their daughters from accepting sweets or money from unknown men was typical of the prescriptive warnings that characterized early sex instruction manuals.[161] Alongside the physical and spiritual dangers of illicit (extra-marital) sex more positive accounts of parenthood were in evidence. Hopkins' texts *The Power of Womanhood* and *The Story of Life* were proof that purity literature contained within it positive strands of moral guidance as well as prohibitive ones.

Through the negative emphasis on "the terrible dangers that beset"[162] young girls and the inescapable element of protective surveillance contained within these directives, Hopkins firmly believed she was empowering working-women and girls. Too many

mothers sent their daughters "like ignorant sheep into a world of wolves", she argued - "with all the forces of hell arrayed against us, we want robust virtue, not helpless innocence".[163] By providing women with sexual knowledge, girls would learn to have greater respect for their bodies, as well as benefit from a measure of protection and choice against undesired male sexual advances.

> ...we must not leave our girls to their own crude notions on the deepest matters of life, certain to be the cruder owing to their inevitable rebound from the conventions which have shackled them for so long ....we must give...our girls, as well as our boys...far more direct teaching than has been customary as to the sanctity of the body.[164]

Hopkins own paradigm of womanhood reflected her realization, albeit with some reluctance, that sexual innocence was no longer adequate protection for young women or children. A new moral order had arrived requiring different expressions of female sexuality, signalling the demise of Ruskinian notions of a sheltered queen, or Patmore's innocent, but sexually anaesthetized angel:

> May [God] not be leading us to form a wider, deeper, stronger ideal; to aim for our girls not so much at Innocence, with her fading wreath of flowers....but to aim at Virtue, with her victor's crown of gold, tried in the fire? May it not be that His Divine providence is constraining us to take as our ideal for our womanhood, not the old sheltered garden, but a strong city of God...whose very gates are made of pearl, through which nothing that defileth is suffered to enter.[165]

5.7 SISTERHOOD, ANTI-DUALISM AND FEMALE SEXUALITY.

In Chapter 1, I referred to women's appropriation of available historical cultural ideologies in terms of both resistance and collusion, status-defying and status-preserving responses.[166] Mary Ryan has remarked that "If women are a force in history, if they make their own history, then we must also face the possibility that females have

participated in the less-sanguine aspects of the gender system".[167] Nineteenth-century rescue work provides us with a useful study of the ambiguous consequences of attributing historical agency to women of the past. Throughout this chapter I have noted the way in which, as the targets of middle-class purity concerns over the feminine ideal, young working women were subject to a range of regulatory legal and educative procedures. These included eviction from brothels, confinement within refuges and industrial training schools and the inculcation of poor mothers with moral welfare literature. What amounted to a comprehensive resocialization programme for female sexual behaviour contained within it a number of repressive features borne out of an insufficient appreciation of working-class sexual habits and a straightforward desire to impose class-specific norms of female purity upon young working-girls. The overarching system of voluntary incarceration necessarily disrupted family ties and fragmented working-class communities. It is something of a historical paradox that in her significant contribution to the emergence of one powerful aspect of women's culture - social purity - Hopkins was largely responsible for the eradication of another visibly female subculture - prostitution.

The more repressive features of her work should not be minimized, or we deny Hopkins' full instrumentality as a historical shaping force. But they can only be viewed in conjunction with other, more progressive aspects of her discourse and activism relating to the definition of female sexuality. More ameliorative forms of preventive work and the discursive construction of prostitute as victim were, as I have already argued, an explicit challenge to the dualistic sphinx-like model of womanhood. The practice of day-time visitation can also be regarded as a genuine effort to deconstruct the oppositional categories of pure and impure. According to Hopkins, midnight meetings and twilight marches fostered the delusion "that these poor girls are a distinct race, not altogether human, that can only be met at strange and unheard-of hours of the night".[168] Hence, the refusal to go amongst prostitutes during the day was a direct admission of cultural and ideological separation between the redeemed and fallen woman.

The women's movement would ultimately stand or fall by its ability to present a united front against the spectre of male sexual abuse. Central to this was the embracing of a new interpretation of female sexuality which included a robust and knowledgeable self-respect for their own bodies and the elimination of the double moral standard among women themselves.

> I ask you what hope is there in this holy warfare till we have secured our very base of operations, till our own camp is united? Whilst we have women who do not believe in the possibility of purity for every man; women who are guilty of the moral turpitude of accepting an outcast class made up of other women's daughters and other women's sisters, so long as it isn't their own...what hope can there be? [169]

Hopkins denounced the Church's elevation of a divine ideal of the feminine, for the "height of the consecration" had had as its proportional inverse "the depth of the curse"[170] for the prostitute. She was especially critical of her female colleagues who upheld the dichotomous formulation of femininity in order to protect their own revered status, for this was a travesty of positive, educated moral purity.

> As things are now men divide us women into two classes; us pure women for whom nothing is too good, and those others for whom nothing is too bad...let us prove by our actions that our womanhood is ONE; that a sin against our lost sisters is a sin against us.[171]

In association with her anti-dualistic definition of female sexuality, a rhetoric of female solidarity and sisterhood was propounded that urged women of different ranks to "combine together, from the duchess to the charwoman, in the strength of our common womanhood".[172] In so momentous a time, what constituted "womanly" to Hopkins was not determined by the physical locality of the private sphere, but by a firm conviction of the integrated nature of women's sexual identity. I end where this chapter began, with Hopkins' "Vision of Womanhood":

> We cannot any longer accept an ideal of womanhood which like the Egyptian Sphinx, is half pure woman and half unclean beast of prey. We cannot in our redeemer's name, we will not shut ourselves up in our pure homes, in our lovely sheltered gardens, in our refined and cultured houses, and leave a 'necessary class of pariah women outside'. We will go forth with Christ to them 'without the camp, bearing his reproach'".[173]

Until women ceased to collude ideologically and practically in the ongoing downfall of their own sex and believe in the morality of their poorer sisters, the morality of men would never be attained. In Chapter 6 I will show how Hopkins' definition of masculinity operated to perpetuate the male oppressor/female victim dualism and encourage a chivalrous defence of womanhood.

CHAPTER 6:

"TRUE KNIGHTS OF GOD": SOCIAL PURITY AND THE LATE-VICTORIAN IDEAL OF CHRISTIAN MANLINESS

6.1 THEMES IN THE HISTORY OF MASCULINITY.

A historiographer of recent literature on masculinity might be forgiven for assuming nineteenth-century definitions of Christian manliness as the sole domain of male commentators. The shifting and often conflicting emphases of the manly ideal proposed by critics such as Thomas Arnold, Charles Kingsley, Thomas Hughes and Thomas Carlyle exerted a prevailing influence upon the Victorian ruling classes - this much is beyond doubt. The Arnoldian educational objective, described by David Newsome as a creed of "godliness and good learning",[1] helped produce that influential generation of "scholar-churchmen" which included Benson, Westcott and Hort, who "read seriously, talked earnestly and sought to make the world a better place".[2] Hughes and Kingsley, on the other hand, equated manliness with a "robust energy, spirited courage and physical vitality" [3] exemplified in Hughes' best-selling novel *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857). According to Norman Vance in *The Sinews of the Spirit: The Ideal of Christian Manliness in Victorian Literature and Religious Thought* (1985), it was a secularized version of this popular mid-Victorian ideal of "muscular Christianity" that would dominate the playing-fields of the English public school by the end of the century. Manliness, defined in terms of sporting ability and the glorification of gamesmanship, was eventually "stripped of the reassurance...of religious belief",[4] and replaced with the Carlylean cult of hero-worship in which adulation of might and muscle reigned.

That codes of manliness were also subject to considerable attention by women, however, is illustrated by the prescriptive writings of purity feminists, whose advocacy of the single moral standard in the 1880s and 1890s hinged upon the regulation and control of the male sexual imperative. I have argued throughout this thesis that for social purists the

moral elevation of society required greater education and awareness of sexual issues. In a vast number of tracts and pamphlets, speeches and essays, women purity workers directed their pedagogical efforts to the real culprits of sexual immorality - men. In the process they produced a distinctive ideal of Christian manliness that prioritized respect for womanhood and male sexual continence. As Chapter 5 has shown, Hopkins was a pioneer of non-remedial approaches to prostitution. A natural extension of her preventive method which aimed to rectify the causes and not just the effects of sexual immorality, was to challenge men to take equal responsibility for their personal moral behaviour. Her interrogation of masculinity comprises the most radical feminist impetus of Hopkins' purity discourse. With the moral sanction of the Christian religion behind her, she took the campaign for an equal moral standard from a defensive policy of female protection to an unprecedented confrontational attack on the redefinition of male sexual behaviour.

Much has been written by historians about male constructions of ideal womanhood and its ramifications for women's lived realities.[5] Little attention has so far been paid to the reverse articulation of gender - women's ideological definitions of masculinity. Apart from the feminist challenge to the injustices of a male-defined social order, few historians of gender have acknowledged female interest in defining masculinity or male sexuality. Likewise, as noted in Chapter 1, contemporary scholarship on Victorian masculinity has so far restricted itself to the all-male spheres of church, army, public school and boy's youth movements, communities in which women played little, if any, part at all.[6] An insight into Hopkins' attempt to redefine concepts of male sexuality and ideal manhood provides a uniquely relational approach to nineteenth-century gender history and prompts interesting revisions in current assessments of Victorian masculinity. Not least of these is the impact of the female author upon the male subject. Viewed in terms of the history of gender, Hopkins' achievement was remarkable. In collusion *with* men, she imposed a gender-stereotype *upon* men, persuading them to adhere to a self-restricting construction of male sexuality for the benefit of women. Such a feat required the deployment of subversive discourses of enormous subtlety and

complexity.

Hopkins' demands for male purity found practical expression through the White Cross Army (WCA), an organization co-founded by her with Bishop Lightfoot and dedicated to the promotion of male purity.[7] The title was altered to that of the White Cross Society (WCS) in 1885. In the following account I will intersperse my use of the terms WCA and WCS according to their chronological relevance. Before I go on to suggest reasons for the widespread appeal of her ideal of Christian manliness, the following section will examine the origins and organizational structure of the WCA through which she disseminated her discourse.

6.2. ORGANISING FOR PURITY - THE WCA AND THE CEPS.

On February 1883, 300 Durham pitmen assembled at the Lightfoot Institute, Bishop Auckland, and pledged themselves to a higher moral standard of living. This, the inaugural meeting of the WCA was the apex of Hopkins' campaign against palliative principles of rescue work. Four years earlier, in the *Plea,* she had condemned the harsh regime of the CPA as symptomatic of the Church's indifference to an inequitable system of sexual morality which seemed only to "cure the evil after it is done...and leave the vital factor, the man, untouched".[8] She continued to urge the formation of a national Church movement which might "band young men together in some sort of brotherhood, or society, or guild, for the protection of women and children from prostitution and degradation".[9] At the 1882 Derby Church Congress, her entreaty for an agency that would infuse into young men "a good strong, passionate sense of...the utter unmanliness of crushing and degrading women"[10] created such a profound impression among the Anglican hierarchy that a committee was formed to consider what practical steps could be taken.[11] On May 25th, 1883, a meeting was held in Lambeth Palace Library, under the presidency of Archbishop Benson, to formulate plans for a central Church Purity Society. Members of George Wilkinson's Churchmen's Union and a committee from the

Derby Congress were present. The resulting CEPS became the official purity agency of the Anglican church, organised on an exclusively diocesan and parochial basis. The CEPS formed a friendly, but more circumscribed counterpart to the efforts of the WCA. It was to produce some of High Anglicanism's keenest talent for the purity cause, notably Bishop Edward King, Montagu Butler, and the architects of the Christian Social Union - Scott Holland, Charles Gore and B. F. Westcott, who were all renowned spokesmen for male chastity.[12]

The emergence of two parallel purity societies established within a few months of each other was based primarily upon class and denominational differentiation. The CEPS aimed for the patronage and support of the wealthier classes, as suggested by its higher subscription rate. As Scott Holland remarked in 1891, the expectation had been "that the rich would take up the movement for purity as the poor had taken up Temperance".[13] The Council Minutes for 1893 show that this had not proved the case. There were pockets of enthusiastic support, however. In her 1885 pamphlet, *The Standard of the White Cross: Do We Need it ? An Appeal to Clergy and Laity,* Hopkins reported that at Oxford under Canon Scott Holland, the purity movement had grown from 200 to 500 members, whilst at Cambridge Dr. Westcott was addressing "large and enthusiastic audiences of young men"[14] on the subject.

6.2.i Hopkins and the WCA.

It was reports of Hopkins' exuberant reception at purity meetings throughout England and Scotland that had prompted Bishop Lightfoot's invitation to speak at his Young Men's Institute in Durham. Hopkins was to create a longstanding impression upon this brilliant, but reclusive bachelor-scholar who maintained active support for purity until his death in 1889.[15] Their partnership remained one of mutual respect throughout. She referred deferentially to his "priceless co-operation and approval",[16] whilst Lightfoot's assessment of the moral double standard owed much to her influence. In his account of

the origins of the White Cross he referred to the awakening of consciences "unrealized hitherto" by her visit to the north, and, in a tone and analysis almost identical to hers, called for the creation of "a more wholesome and righteous public opinion"[17] by striking at the root of the evil:

> Not until it is generally recognized that the man who has wrought a woman's degradation is at least as great an offender against society as the man who has robbed a till or...forged a cheque - nay, much greater, for he has done a far more irreparable wrong - not until society is prepared to visit such an offender with the severest social penalties, will there be any real change for the better. So long as the violation of purity is condoned in the one sex and visited with shame in the other, our unrighteousness and unmanliness must continue to work out its own terrible retribution. [18]

The obligations of the WCA were drawn up at Durham by Hopkins, Bishop Lightfoot, the Rev. Armitage Robinson (Lightfoot's chaplain and later Dean of Westminster), and a fourth unnamed clergyman.[19] The aims were heavily indebted to those of Wilkinson's Churchmen's Union, and attested well to the affirmation of a single standard of sexual chastity and the idealization of male chivalry:

1. To treat all women with respect, and endeavour to protect them from right and wrong and degradation.
2. To endeavour to put down all indecent language and coarse jests.
3. To maintain the law of purity as equally binding upon men and women.
4. To endeavour to spread these principles among my companions, and to try and help my younger brothers.
5. To use every possible means to fulfil the commandment, "Keep thyself pure".[20]

The response to Hopkins' inaugural address was instantaneous. Almost half of the 300 miners present pledged support for the five obligations read out by Lightfoot, and took

up the card of membership.[21] While the CEPS canvassed for the patronage of the rich, the working-class origins of the WCA made a broader, cross-class appeal to the masses which required more complex, multiple presentations of purity so as to penetrate the barriers of social and economic division. Middle-class men were encouraged to join through the rhetoric of chivalrous service to the oppressed, of which more will be said later. Hopkins wooed working-men on the other hand, with the suggestion that purity might "protect their own class from wrong" [22] and form part of a larger demand for political liberty.

> ...if you belong to the upper classes you will join because it is the unprotected girls of the poor that chiefly fall victims...If you are a working man, you will join for the sake of your own girls, and because you are fighting for the girls of the working class generally. [23]

According to both Hopkins and Lightfoot, the overwhelmingly working-class composition of prostitution rendered purity "emphatically the working man's question".[24] Because it was the moneyed classes that sustained the social evil, neither of them viewed the populist approach of the WCA as "something set on foot for the improvement of the working-classes...alone", but argued instead that "the rank and file of working men, who work hard, marry young, and have no money to spend are unquestionably...the men who contribute least to the keeping up of an outcast and degraded class of women and children".[25] The degradation of women was such a fundamental source of evil argued Hopkins, that purity must eventually transcend class differences and establish unity between the working-men of Durham and the privileged scholarly elite of Oxford.

> Have we not hated, and abused, and been selfish to one another long enough? Suppose we try helping one another instead...all alike rallying in one common brotherhood round the sanctity of the family, the purity of the home, the spotless honour of Englishmen?[26]

The WCA's ecumenicalism favoured its message amongst the urban industrial classes and encouraged the support of benefactors such as Frank Crossley and his wife. Hopkins frequently exhorted Anglican colleagues to organize "a friendly Conference with...the Nonconformist Ministers".[27] As noted previously, she was fiercely anti-sectarian in her propagation of purity which she believed warranted absolute working flexibility, thereby overcoming denominational distinctions. "It is of the utmost importance that "the blessed company of all faithful people"...should unite in attacking an evil which...will certainly be victorious over one division alone of the great army".[28] A Manchester purity meeting addressed by her in 1882 provided a model of interdenominational dialogue with Bishop Fraser, Alexander Maclaren and Bishop Henry Vaughan sharing the same platform.[29]

Between 1883 and 1887, Hopkins' nationwide promotion of the WCS took on revivalist proportions with gatherings of between 800 and 2,000 men up and down the country.[30] Ever critical of the Church's reticence in discussing purity, she defended these controversial mass meetings as essential to the creation of a righteous public opinion, declaring that "the larger the meeting...the sounder and healthier the tone".[31] The major function of the White Cross Series of purity literature was educational, seeking to combat the torrent of obscene material with a counter-stream of sound inculcations to a "higher, purer more knightly type of manhood".[32] As Hopkins advised her co-workers:

> ...the mass of the work of educating public opinion must be done by the quiet and unobtrusive agency of good, strong, racy, but carefully worded publications; dull and sermonesque little tracts...are not the flora which the fauna we have to deal with is known to feed on.[33]

As its major theorist, Hopkins composed all but four of a series of over fifty White Cross pamphlets during the final decades of the nineteenth-century.[34] Combining Christian morality with popular medical science, her dramatic, sometimes dubious polemic dealt with a range of causes and solutions to adolescent male impurity. These will be explored more fully later on in this chapter. Her literary output and campaigning successes earned

her the open admiration of many churchmen. Lightfoot described her as having done "the work of ten men in ten years" [35] and Scott Holland observed that "most women are very good speakers, but very few rise to distinct eloquence. She was one of the very few".[36]

6.2.ii Expansion and amalgamation.

In 1886, Lightfoot portrayed England as "dotted over with associations, guilds, brotherhoods and the like, enrolled under the White Cross banner".[37] WCS meetings consisted of a monthly devotional service or medical lecture on purity followed by prayer, after which newcomers were invited to receive the card of membership and pledge themselves to the obligations. The organizational structure of the White Cross was diverse in the extreme, composed of diocesan and municipal societies, university associations, and branches in the armed forces at home and overseas.[38] The sensitivity of the topic and the plethora of current reform agencies made recruitment problematic. Hopkins advocating forming "inner White Cross bands"[39] within existing bible classes, temperance societies or, a particularly successful experiment in Scotland, youth organizations such as the YMCA.[40] This way, she reasoned, the WCS would make more effective use of those groups already at work and encourage mutual support in terms of numbers and vitality. "The White Cross not being a centralised society, lends itself especially to existing organisations, as men can form an inner White Cross band without finding themselves entangled in the machinery of a fresh society".[41]

Frustratingly for the historian, the strategy of institutional assimilation renders estimates of WCS membership highly tenuous. Hopkins herself noted that "scores of Branches are formed, and are quietly at work, and one only hears of them incidentally, or does not learn of them at all".[42] Defending the necessarily discreet work of purity against unfavourable comparisons made by contemporaries between the WCS and the Church of England Temperance Society, she demanded, "can one send in a tabular statement of the number of women who have been treated with respect?" [43] As Bristow has concluded,

however, it is clear that social purity never rivalled numerically the efforts made on behalf of temperance.[44]

In 1891, a formal, but amicable amalgamation took place between the WCS and the CEPS under the joint title of The White Cross League, Church of England Society.[45] The structural eclecticism of the WCS and the loss of both its founders had seriously undermined its initial vitality and practicable effectiveness by the late 1880s. Lightfoot retired as president in 1888 due to ill-health and Hopkins' chronic invalidism enforced a reclusive lifestyle soon after. As Sherwin Bailey has concluded, the obvious connections of the WCS with Anglicanism resulted in only "nominal support from Free Churchmen", whilst it suffered simultaneously from "want of official relation to the Church of England".[46] Hopkins had long been an advocate of the coalition of the two societies for the benefit of funds, travelling secretaries and increased influence. "There can be no little doubt as to the disadvantages of divided interests, and the contrary advantages of unity" [47] she wrote in 1889.

The ideals and obligations of the original WCA continued to remain central to the endeavours of the new White Cross League, however. Hopkins' retirement to Brighton failed to diminish her prolific publication rate and requests for her male purity literature continued well into the next century. In excess of 2,000,000 of her tracts were in circulation by 1907 and the demand from overseas and the influential support of the colonial bishops ensured the propagation of her material throughout Australia, New Zealand, India, the US, Trinidad, South Africa and Japan.[48] She contemplated the global diffusion of an English concept of manhood with unreflecting imperialist confidence when she described the influence of the White Cross over its "vast world empire" as "the most hopeful and inspiring thought".[49]

The phenomenal sales and distribution levels of White Cross literature, nationally and internationally, rendered Hopkins' influence in defining late-Victorian constructions of

Christian manliness substantial. Despite the input of Lightfoot, the success with which the concept of male purity was circulated among the millions remained Hopkins' achievement alone. In a potent mixture of faith, chivalry and military heroism, she portrayed the WCS as a modern order of knighthood and its crusade, the demise of female ignominy. Contained within this romantic ideal was a hard-hitting feminist analysis of male sexual abuse.

6.3 DEFINING MALE SEXUALITY.

Prevailing codes of Victorian masculinity were sanctioned by a series of naturalistic assumptions which regarded the sexual impulse as an essential attribute of manliness. In 1875, Acton defined male sexuality as a powerful instinctual force which privileged man in "his dignity, his character as head and ruler, and...his importance".[50] Failure to differentiate between masculinity and virility in the emphasis upon the "natural" strength of the male sexual urge, meant that many medical experts believed that although preferable, male continence could not be guaranteed. As Margaret Jackson has commented, for Acton, "sexuality was...little more than an animal instinct, subject only to limited control, [thus] a man with a strong sexual disposition was almost by definition lacking in strong will".[51]

Along with the majority of late-Victorian feminists, Hopkins recognized that the power to define what was, or was not, "natural", constituted a fundamental plank in the maintenance of an inequitable system of power relations between women and men. Unimpressed by medical arguments that excused the sexual shortcomings of men in terms of their biological inevitability, she sought to dismantle the rhetoric of "natural law", and expose it for the convenient sexual-political tool that it was.[52] She legitimated her deconstruction of opposing accounts by working carefully within the same medical-scientific framework, turning the dominant consensus on its head by establishing a series

of moral principles not dissimilar to the account of "Christian physiology" proffered by Elizabeth Blackwell, which asserted male chastity as natural and the male sexual imperative as unequivocally *unnatural.* Appeals to "natural animalism" she countered, were entirely fallacious:

> ...in the whole of the animal creation...it is reserved for man alone to ill-treat and desert, and degrade and destroy, the being who is given to him to be the mother of his children and his devoted companion, and then to turn round and say that in so doing he has obeyed the dictates of nature![53]

Hopkins made frequent reference to the ignominious plight of the young prostitute as a reminder of the devastating and scandalous impact of men's neglect of the higher natural law of purity. In order to underscore the death and disorder incumbent upon "the man obeying the beast instead of the beast obeying the man",[54] male sexual excess was given a Gothic horror gloss, where, in a series of scenes reminiscent of Dante's *Inferno,* drinking bars and places of amusement were compared to dungeons full of incarcerated, rotting bodies.[55] Hopkins presented her major model of male sexuality in *True Manliness* (1883), her most popular moral prescriptive essay which achieved sales of in excess of one million by 1909.[56] *True Manliness* also sheds further light upon her representation of the mind/body dualism. Man was portrayed as an "intelligent being mounted on a spirited horse" whose "real Self...[would] have to master the animal body, and make its instincts serve the purposes of the man".[57] Despite the connotations of bodily subordination, Hopkins' advocacy of male purity as the ultimate spiritual and physical state accorded due worth to the role of the "carnal plane"[58] in the development of a unified moral personality. In accordance with her definition of purity, as a metaphor for manliness the rider on horseback must similarly reject both asceticism and hedonism:

> You would not begin by starving him down to a mere shadow till all the spirit had died out of him; nor would you...give him his head and let him run away with you. You would simply learn how to manage him...so that

the strength and swiftness of the beautiful creature would become yours.[59]

Unavowedly Augustinian in her belief that lust represented the enslavement of the higher moral senses, Hopkins' concept of male purity was shaped not by a punitive need to subjugate the flesh, but by the desire to elevate and revere human corporeality. There is "nothing low or vile in the animal body itself"[60] she asserted, as long as it continues to form an integrated part of man's moral existence. Thus, men who commited impure acts defiled the sacred status of the body, turning "the temple of the Holy Ghost...into the devil's pigsty".[61] Man was no mere animal "locked within limits of [his] nature", but a "self-conscious spiritual being", endowed with all the necessary attributes of morality - a conscience, the power of reason, and a self-directing "spiritual will".[62] In the purity tract *Is it Natural ?* (n.d.) Hopkins contended that refusal to act in accordance with these faculties would result in profound physical and spiritual alienation, with man abdicating his place "in the kingdom of Nature as well as of God".[63] Failure to exercise the God-given will to self-control contravened the original divine intention and was therefore unnatural.

It is in her construction of male sexuality that Hopkins' scientific background and intellectual indebtedness to her father manifests itself most clearly. Purity had remained a constant feature of Victorian definitions of masculinity, from Arnold's strenuous moral virtue to the robust muscular Christianity of Thomas Hughes who, in *Tom Brown at Oxford* (1861), declared purity as "the crown of all real manliness".[64] Social purists both confirmed and revised the intrinsic connection between purity and manhood in a notable example of nineteenth-century religio-scientific discourse constructed and transmitted for popular consumption.[65] As Owen Chadwick has pointed out, despite the initial blow delivered to natural theology by Darwin's theory of natural selection, and the subsequent crisis of faith encountered by almost an entire generation of mid-Victorians, the acceptance of evolutionism by the 1880s, whilst not universal, "was both permissible

and respectable"[66] amongst educated Christians. Thus, the purity offensive against sexual vice was able to draw heavily upon a particular reading of moral Darwinism, interpreting the individual spiritual struggle against the sins of the flesh through an evolutionary schema that emphasized the lower and higher human impulses. As Hopkins argued in *True Manliness,* it was the function of the human will and moral senses, differentiating humanity from the remainder of the created order, to redirect the lower instincts and appetites towards the higher interests of life.

Nevertheless, Darwinist scientific ideology yielded rather ambiguous insights regarding the development of female and male sexuality. In his *Descent of Man* (1871), Darwin had shown that sexual difference was essential for evolutionary survival with the active, combative involvement of the male in the struggle for sexual selection necessarily implying a higher stage of evolution than that of the intuitive, but passive, female. It was not difficult through this reading for the disciples of Darwin to reinforce prevailing codes of male sexual aggression and female sexual subordination as the peak of human evolutionary progress. As Showalter has commented, "female intellectual inferiority could be understood as the result of reproductive specialisation, and the "womanly" traits of self-sacrifice and service so convenient for the comfort of a patriarchal society could be defended...as essential for the...improvement of the race".[67]

What Lucy Bland has described as the "multivalency"[68] of Darwinian theory enabled social purists like Hopkins to circumvent such an interpretation and make use of alternative themes more favourable to the promotion of sexual purity and restraint. In his influential definition of morality, Darwin had highlighted the roles of conscience, self-control, love and altruism as integral to the formation of a superior human culture. Set against the "appetitive and impulsive...selfish and egoistic" [69] characteristics of the lower self, these features were lauded as "the most notable of all the attributes of men".[70] A worldview which enshrined the conquering of passion through chastity and self-control as ultimate manifestations of superior human moral and spiritual development, was

clearly consonant with the discourse of the purity movement.

Of greatest significance to social purists was the challenge posed by evolutionary theory to essentialist definitions of human nature. Sexual morality it was contended, was no biological given, but a disposition open to change and refinement through human effort, social context and the forces of civilization.[71] As Hopkins observed, all men encountered temptation, but with constant vigilance and a favourable environment, the "true" man might redirect his sexual excesses for the benefit of society. Cultural expectation played as formative a role in this process as innate biological traits. "Men are by nature made just as modest and full of personal self-respect and delicacy as women...had not all their natural and finer instincts been trodden down...by the dictates of the world and the low tone of social opinion".[72] As the preface to a purity tract entitled *The Testimony of Medical Men* (n.d.) which marshalled expert medical opinion to support the cause of chastity, declared, "human nature is not a 'fixed quality', but something which varies infinitely in different men, and which may be lifted, altered, and transformed by the influences which are brought to bear upon it". [73]

The implications of such a message were revolutionary. Evolutionism equipped purity feminists "to deny the inevitability of current masculine sexual behaviour, and the eternal victimized sexuality of women"[74] by raising the possibility that human nature was profoundly malleable and transformable. This gave women an unprecedented optimism concerning men's ability to redirect and reform their "bestial" instincts. The Lamarckian strand within Darwinism argued that socially acquired habits could be passed on to future generations as hereditary features. This implied that "the learning of new habits of sexual continence could put heredity on a new and 'purer' road"[75] and eliminate the sexual exploitation of women in the process. Sexual chastity could confidently be predicted as the consummation of man's moral, physical and spiritual progress. As Hopkins reasoned, what would at first be an effort of will would eventually become "a natural disposition":[76]

> The habit of purity, which at first may have resulted from only a sleepless watch of the will in directing the thoughts and imagination into safe channels, becomes instinctive recoil from the least touch of defilement. [77]

Having convinced her male readership of the evolutionary superiority of purity and of their ability to control and modify their instincts accordingly, the remainder of Hopkins' writings on male sexuality were taken up with the expressly didactic purpose of educating young men on how best to avoid the temptations of purity.

6.4 EDUCATING FOR MALE CHASTITY.

In spite of the Lamarckian stress on inherited habit, social purists continued to reiterate the need for perpetual struggle against the sins of sexual excess. Education for male chastity was a key objective of the purity campaign generally, and the particular function of the White Cross Series of literature. Purity exhortations to male continence formed part of a larger debate on the relationship between sexual activity and physical health that was waged between churchmen, public school educators, feminists, purity advocates and medical experts throughout the latter half of the century.[78] The health-related implications of sexual abstinence had divided the medical profession for many decades. As early as 1854, in his book *The Elements of Social Science,* George Drysdale had advocated the necessity of early exercise for the male generative organ as a means to avoiding impotence and atrophy in later life. Such theories, whilst never mainstream, had received "considerable circulation among the lay public",[79] and during the 1880s a small, but vociferous section of medical experts continued to proclaim male continence and the suppression of the male sexual instinct as injurious to health.

Notwithstanding those professionals like Acton who made token gestures in the direction of continence whilst privately believing in the ineluctability of active male sexuality, purity feminists like Hopkins and Blackwell vastly overestimated the actual strength of

the hedonist lobby.[80] As Lesley Hall has argued, "in spite of the purity literature warning against medical men who advocated fornication as essential for male health, it is exceptionally hard to find evidence of doctors...actually recommending this remedy".[81] Not until the rise of sexology and the work of theorists such as Havelock Ellis and Krafft-Ebing did a more general level of medical and public acceptance of the significance of sexual pleasure begin to take place.[82] Until then, the dominant code of sexuality, what Peter Cominos has termed "the gospel of continence",[83] was dictated by the purity vanguard itself with its demand for a stringent, regulatory control of the male sexual instinct.

Masculinity was construed by the social purists as a lifelong battle, "requiring constant watchfulness and careful supervision"[84] in order to avoid slipping back into promiscuous behaviour. The struggle it seems, began at an immature age. Much of the purity literature was aimed at juvenile boys in the attempt to engender an early reverence for the female sex. According to common purity consensus, puberty represented a vital stage in the development of the sexual and moral character. Habits learned during youth could either impede or promote chastity and self-control during manhood. As Hopkins argued, "the dangerous bit in a man's life comes from 14 or 16 to 28...the bit which forms his character for life".[85] Adolescence was viewed as a perilous time in the formation of male sexual identity, a threshold of moral choices which once made would determine a boy's course as "true man" or "maddened beast".[86]

It is in the context of this appeal to the young that the waves of anti-masturbation fever propagated by the purity campaigns of the 1880s can best be comprehended. For many clergymen and educators, masturbation was regarded as the pre-eminent male sexual perversion. As John Fout has explained, masturbation not only "symbolized the horror of being sexually out of control",[87] its abuse of the chaste body theatened to "dilute the very essence of maleness", [88] suggesting as with prostitution and homosexuality, "a sexual outlet for men outside the confines of marriage and the family".[89] In 1875 Dr. James

Paget described masturbation as "a filthiness forbidden by God [and] an unmanliness despised by men".[90] Many CEPS members such as Montagu Butler who was headmaster of Harrow, and Edward Lyttleton, headmaster of Eton, were prominent campaigners against schoolboy masturbation. In 1884, the CEPS established a Schoolmasters' Committee headed by Butler to look into the statistics of the "solitary vice" and encourage parents to educate their sons about its dangers.[91] By the mid 1880s, a range of pamphlets were available of which Lyttleton's *Causes and Prevention of Immorality in Schools* (1883) was a central text.[92] Hopkins contributed to this debate in terms of her emphasis on sex education for the young, and the need to moralize the public schools. "If...through the temptations of school-life...you have formed any habits of impurity" she wrote in *Purity: A Confirmation Paper* (n.d.), "then remember that this is the first thing that must be given up on your Confirmation".[93] The bible was perfectly firm on this point, that "neither fornicators nor effeminate - those who yield to habits of secret impurity - 'shall inherit the kingdom of heaven'".[94]

Masturbation-pathology and homophobia have been viewed by historians of sexuality as indicators of a real gender crisis in late-Victorian masculinity.[95] As the site of "inchoate male anxieties",[96] the horror over masturbation was fuelled by medical experts, purists and quacks alike, arguing for its moral and physical reprehensibility in the most graphic of terms. Hall has observed that masturbation was blamed "for a variety of ailments from warts...to impotence, consumption, convulsions, insanity and death".[97] Underpinning the more serious of these claims was Cominos' theory of the "gospel of thrift in semen".[98] Like the model of male sexuality proffered by Hopkins, this theory maintained that the body was possessed of a fixed quantity of energy circulating at any one time. Expenditure of sexual energy in terms of loss of seminal fluid depleted the funds required in other areas of intellectual or physical development resulting in deleterious physiological results. As Hopkins cautioned her male readers:

> ...every time you excite this part of your nature you waste your nervous energies, you draw away what is wanted to feed your brain; you set up a

> misdirected excitement, and cause nervous derangement which may in the end lead to an unhealthy and morbid state of things.[99]

In the Victorian "spermatic economy", sexual vice resulted "in poverty and early marriages".[100] By contrast, sexual continence or retention of seminal fluids created a reserve of personal energy that could be rechannelled in other directions including superior fitness, mental agility or upward social mobility. Thus Hopkins reasoned, "to an immature frame all sexual indulgence [was] not only a sin against God...defiling to the temple of the Holy Ghost...but it [was] also letting your life-powers, all the energy you want for getting on in the world, just run to waste".[101] As Cominos has argued, the sublimated male sexual instinct adhered to the economic virtues of thrift and work, and thus the accumulation of wealth.[102] During a period where imperial progress and advance were of increasing public concern, the physical and moral purity of England's youth acquired national relevance.[103] Witness Hopkins' passionate outburst:

> What might not this degraded and wasted passion, spent in destroying women and children, have accomplished if it had been stored up in a righteous heart...a clear brain, and a pure body? What heroic efforts for the public good...what bright increase of knowledge...what successful political life, what grand redress for the wronged and degraded, what social elevation for England! [104]

The sin of sexual indulgence was construed by Hopkins as an addiction not dissimilar to that of alcoholism, including mental as well as physical temptation. "To be pure in act is not enough" she warned White Cross members, "you must be pure in heart".[105] To avoid brooding on the prospects of licentiousness and becoming maddened by "feverish greed",[106] the strength of the sexual appetite had to be curbed from the outset. To this end, she suggested a variety of diversions. In addition to refraining from reading "trashy novels and divorce-court news", or entering into the "filthy jests, nasty stories [and] unclean words"[107] of their colleagues, Hopkins exhorted schoolboys, university graduates and working-men alike to "crowd out the devil"[108] by filling their days with

wholesome and useful pursuits. Among those listed were regular prayer, and bible study, science, natural history, drawing, music, reading, athletics and plenty of vigorous exercise. "Get upon your bicycle, or your tricycle. Break your noses if you like. Only don't break a woman's heart" [109] she implored.

The anti-masturbation fever of the purity campaigners has been evaluated very negatively by social historians, and historians of sexuality. Bristow has argued that social purists were responsible for increasing the "burden of anxiety on the young" [110] by propagating outmoded sexual myths and creating a widening gulf between educated opinion and popular belief. It is unquestionable that many purity speakers developed the rhetoric of male chastity in an unnecessarily lurid and intimidating manner.[111]A survey of Hopkins' writings demonstrates that generally speaking, she was not as preoccupied with masturbation as her male colleagues, and there are express gender-related reasons for this. Whilst she recited the common formula of "consumption, lunacy and other grievous plagues" [112] arising from the habit of "secret impurity", the number of references to the "solitary vice" at a time when the pathologization of masturbation was at its height are remarkably few. The reason for this is made clear in her White Cross pamphlet *Wild Oats or Acorns ?* (n.d.), where she compares the gravity of masturbation with that of the male abuse of prostitutes. "If your temptation is one that only hurts yourself" she advised her audience, "at least the sin we commit against ourselves leaves repentance within our reach, whereas we can never repent for another whom we have caused to sin".[113] According to Hopkins' analysis, it was the sexual exploitation of women not masturbation, that constituted the mortal sin for men.

6.5 NEO-MEDIEVALISM AND THE CULT OF CHIVALRY.

Hopkins' recourse to the neo-medievalism of late Victorian culture, most prominently the cult of chivalry, gave the concept of male purity mass appeal. Well aware of the limited attraction for men that public endorsement of sexual continence might have, she

suggested on frequent occasions that male chastity organizations eliminate the word "purity" from their title and instead promote a more active, crusading spirit of reform."Young men as a rule will not join a 'Purity Association'" she wrote in a letter to the CEPS journal, *The Vanguard* :

> They shrink from professing themselves purer and better than other men, as well as from making a parade of personal virtue of this nature. But let them band themselves under the banner of the White Cross, ...call them to a noble crusade against all that is foul and base...and they will generously respond, and form into a noble brotherhood.[114]

The cult of chivalry had enjoyed a major revitalization throughout the nineteenth-century as Victorians cast a nostalgic eye back to the Middle Ages in search of pre-industrial models of social and religious stability. Mark Girouard's *The Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman* (1981), has illustrated how medievalism permeated every aspect of Victorian life, from the influential novels of Sir Walter Scott to the architectural achievements of Pugin, from the poetry of Tennyson to the paintings of Rossetti or Burne Jones and, in religious terms, the liturgical reforms of the Oxford Movement.[115] Vance has argued that the meaning of chivalry in its original context as the idle diversion of an elite social caste would have found little to recommend it to the earnest and assiduous Victorian middle-classes. Whilst retaining some of the glamour and prestige of its medieval standing, the nineteenth-century cult of chivalry translated the hereditary privileges of an aristocratic group into a coded series of moral values "democratically applied to all classes".[116]

This semantic shift centralized the concept of medieval chivalry in religious and moral constructions of masculinity. Exhortations to Christian manliness were replete with the moral possibilities of knighthood during the latter decades of the century. In a series of sermons on *David* preached in 1865 for example, Charles Kingsley gave a typically anti-

Catholic gloss to the concept, portraying the chivalrous origins of Protestant Christianity as a manly response to the effeminate lifestyles of medieval monks.[117] Thomas Hughes also highlighted chivalry as a central ideological strand in his definition of muscular Christianity:

> So far as I know, the least of the muscular Christians has hold of the old chivalrous and Christian belief that a man's body is given him to be trained and brought into subjection and then used for the protection of the weak [and] the advancement of all righteous causes. [118]

In 1885, when the Dean of Gloucester spoke of the consecration of manhood to be won by "the knightly courage and knightly self-mastery of the modern Arthurs and modern Galahads",[119] he too had in mind a chivalry synonymous with the Church's overall mission to the poor and destitute. Purity feminists like Hopkins appropriated the medievalist spirit of ecclesiastical reform with its desire for the general "advancement of all righteous causes", and applied it specifically to the degraded plight of the female. According to Hopkins, the ideal knight-errant not only defended the wrongfully oppressed, he dedicated himself to the service of women, performing deeds of valour in her honour. An episode taken from her purity tract *The Ride of Death* illustrates this romantic notion, where a young officer makes a gallant dash to rescue a camp-follower from behind enemy territory. His dramatic charge across enemy lines, swinging the woman up onto his horse and turning back into the "ride of death" is brought to a literary climax by the corresponding chivalry of the opposing side who, having seen the gallant objective,

> ...downed muskets and fired not a shot. Out rang the cheers of the enemy, cheers...echoed from the British lines as he passed over safely with that living trophy of his noble gallantry stamped true knight of God by the manly deed.[120]

The code of chivalry and its exaltation of the feminine provided a perfect symbol system

within which to frame demands for the elimination of the sexual exploitation of women and children. It was for the knights of the White Cross Hopkins wrote, to "slay the dragon of prostitution"[121] and rescue womanhood anew through a life of sexual purity and heroic self-sacrifice. Tennyson's *Idylls of the King,* described by Vance as "the greatest work of ethically self-conscious Victorian medievalism" [122] was a major influence upon Hopkins' construal of masculinity and the overall image of "true manliness" depicted by the authors of the White Cross Series. As Girouard has pointed out, it was relatively easy "to change Sir Galahad from a medieval symbol of virginity to a Victorian symbol of purity".[123] The words of Tennyson's virgin knight - "My strength is as the strength of ten because my heart is pure"[124] were adopted as the motto of the WCA, underlining the romantic-moralistic vision of the contest for self-control and moral strength. Chastity was a glamorous, noble battleground, the pre-eminent struggle of the modern knight.

6.6 CHRISTIAN MILITARISM.

The Pauline origins of the language of Christian warfare, whether construed as the spiritual life of the individual or the work of the church in the world, meant that militaristic imagery provided a ready source for the defining of nineteenth-century religious identities of masculinity. Use of military terminology came easily to many purity feminists whose early evangelism in the domestic mission-field had been characterized by work among the army's "roughs and toughs".[125] Hopkins' own attempts to Christianize the armed forces had evolved through her close friendship with Sarah Robinson and the Soldiers' Institute project at Portsmouth. She wrote several pamphlets for servicemen, and the continued dissemination of her material to troops at home and abroad meant that Christian militaristic symbolism remained a pertinent mode of discourse in her sexual political writings.[126]

During the latter decades of the century the unremitting expansion of the British colonies

generated waves of imperialist sentiment, rendering the prestige of the British Army higher than at any other time before. The army's new popularity was promoted through children's and adult literature, as well as the gladiatorial athleticism of the public schools.[127] The imperialism of late-Victorian culture also manifested itself in the increasing "para-militarism"[128] of religious work. In its very name - "white standing for purity, the Army for disciplined strength, and the Cross for the underlying truth that the fight was for and in Christ"[129] - Hopkins' WCA typified this increasing militarization of values and symbols associated with Christian manliness. The WCA never adopted the outward accoutrements of ranks, titles, or drilling practices promoted by Christian youth organisations such as the Salvation Army, Church Army or Boy's Brigade.[130] Yet its discourse and values were intrinsically militaristic. Members were addressed as "soldiers" and the qualities of self-discipline, duty and comradeship were perceived as integral to the battle against impurity. As one of Hopkins' recruitment tracts advised:

> Give yourself the strength of feeling that you are fighting this battle with lots of others. That sense of comradeship is a great thing; many a man will be a coward in plain clothes, but clap a red coat on his back and a comrade on either side of him and he'll march straight up to the cannon's mouth.[131]

Olive Anderson's seminal essay on the growth of Christian militarism has indicated the way in which mid-century heroes of the Crimean War and Indian Mutiny inspired a new genre of proselytization amongst preachers and writers - the soldier-saint hagiography.[132] Hopkins made frequent references to contemporary war heroes in order to give her panegyrical narratives of mythical moral courage such as *The Ride of Death* greater authenticity. Her pantheonization of figures like General Gordon made skilful use of current patriotic fervour. Gordon's premature death in the service of God and Empire had established him as a cult figure in the soldier-saint genre of religious eulogies, catalyzing British imperialism "as a mass emotion"[133] unlike anything else previously. Hopkins' portrayed him as the "perfect embodiment"[134] of the Victorian knight. His

was true English gallantry, not understood in its crude, popular sense, as "the man who could boast of the number of his 'conquests', embellishing his manly person with scalps of weak women and love-sick girls", but as the gallant courage of the self-sacrificing hero "who went off on a service of danger for his country...[was] abandoned till it was too late...[and] through treachery...fell dead at his country's feet".[135]

Whilst highly sensitized to issues of gender, social purity feminists could exhibit all the race and class myopia of their male counterparts. Hopkins' ardent patriotism frequently slipped over into religious xenophobia. Her essay *The National Flag* (n.d.) argued at length that Christian morality was vital to imperial advance. A nation made up of "withered stalks of men"[136] had no divine vision in the conduct of its national and political affairs. Britain's continued economic supremacy was contingent upon the superior chivalry of her manhood. Thus the purity of the relations between the sexes lay at the very heart of national progress. The empires of Greece and Rome may have fallen as a result of their decadence, moral corruption and sexual vice, but as "the mother of all nations" England could not "suffer to send forth polluted waters into other lands".[137]

> Does not all history teach us that the welfare and very life of a nation is determined by moral causes, and that it is the...races that respect their women...that are the tough, prolific, ascendant races, the noblest in type, the most enduring in progress and the most fruitful in propagating themselves? [138]

Hopkins' unreflecting moral imperialism was also demonstrated in the way that the chivalrous-hearted Englishman was defined over and against the savagery attributed to the "lower" races. In her pamphlet *The British Zulu* (1891), her use of the term "Zulu" was synonymous with depravity and promiscuity. The "British Zulu" was a man with no control over his sexual appetite, an oppressor and abuser of women. Although she is trying to illustrate in this text the hypocrisy of many Englishmen who consider

themselves racially and culturally superior to heathen races, she ends up resorting to ethnocentric discursive forms. "Are you quite sure that the average Englishman has got much beyond the level of the dirty savage"? she asks, "In the power of the redeemed man rise above the 'savage' - the lower nature in you".[139]

A potent symbol of British moral superiority was the abolition of slavery. In *Conquering and to Conquer vol. II* (1886) Hopkins attributed the downfall of such a "dread under-world of woe and oppression" [140] to the egalitarian and democratic impulse of the Christian faith "where God's truth is of no colour"[141] and all men were brothers. Britain's involvement in the movement against the slave-trade had produced chivalrous knights such as William Wilberforce, "grasping his shield of faith"[142] and ready to do battle on behalf of the weak. James Walvin has described the way in which the "evangelical drive against slavery, firstly in British possessions, later against foreign slaveries, itself became a form of cultural imperialism, enabling Britain to hawk its moral superiority around the world".[143] Abolitionism epitomized the civilizing mantle of imperial English manhood for Hopkins, combining ethnic and religious superiority. Slavery and heathenism were conversely regarded as the distinctive hallmarks of immoral, uncivilized nations. In the 1880s of course, abolitionist discourse leant itself readily to purity feminists concerned over levels of "white slavery".[144] Hopkins made a direct comparison between the abolition of the slave-trade and the "present conflict with the degradation of women, which is also a trade in human beings".[145]

6.7 DOMESTICITY AND CHRISTIAN MANLINESS.

One way in which purity feminists *did* challenge current imperialist constructions was to apply the chivalrous ideal of masculinity to the domestic sphere. As mentioned before, strong links were forged by commentators between national progress, personal morality and Christian family life. Unlike many critics who considered masculinity in terms of public codes of conduct alone, Hopkins' focus on sexual purity necessarily foregrounded

the private, domestic sphere as a site of the formation and culmination of the Victorian manly ideal. In accordance with domestic ideology, female moral guidance was paramount. 'The woman is the heart of the man, the shaping and moulding influence of life", she wrote, "who weaves...the finer tissues of his own character".[146] In *The Power of Womanhood* she encouraged mothers to keep their sons in the purer, refined atmosphere of home under maternal control for as long as possible. Indeed, her overwhelming antipathy towards the public school system which she described as "the exclusive society of little boys, with their childish chatter [and] foolish little codes"[147] was based upon its absence of female visibility. "For myself, I am convinced that as boys and girls are sent into the world in roughly equal proportions, we were never intended to pile hundreds of boys together without girls, and largely without any feminine influence at all".[148]

Such acknowledgment of the significance of female influence provides an instructive contrast to accounts that stressed masculine self-image and the feminized affections of home life as mutually exclusive categories. John Tosh has argued that the "extreme emotional reticence" [149] of late-Victorian manliness was due in large measure to the formal austerity of the disciplinarian father figure. A sharp division in familial gender attributes meant that boys "learned to associate tenderness and affection exclusively with women", making it "extremely difficult"[150] for them to accommodate such feelings within their own masculine self-image. Hopkins interpreted the roles of husband and father as in terms of the authoritative, benevolent patriarch - "the revelation of God in the pure family".[151] Yet, in pleading for a new domestic manliness, she also incorporated many corrective features attributed to womanhood, such as pity, compassion, tenderness, suffering and love. Fathers were encouraged to overt displays of warmth and affection in the shared moral responsibility of teaching and training children. "Make a little time to hear about their small concerns" she urged. " Let your little girl get up on your knee, and wrestle her small head close to your strong heart, for there is no safeguard to a girl like a kind father's love".[152]

Husbands were similarly exhorted to a domesticated form of Christian chivalry. Without countermanding the concept of male jurisdiction contained within the Genesis narratives, Hopkins mitigates any potential abuse of the husband's sexual and domestic power by underscoring the biblical concept of male headship as self-sacrificing service. The Christian idea "that the strong are made for the weak" meant that "the man if he be the head of the woman is therefore the servant of the woman, protecting her, caring for her and placing his strength at her service".[153] In *Man and Woman; or, The Christian Ideal* (1883), Hopkins delineated the divine origins of spousal chivalry - that "the man is to 'love the woman, and give himself for her, as Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it'....Not our idea of the self-sacrificing woman, but God's idea of the self-sacrificing man". [154]

Hopkins upholds conservative Anglican theologies of gender with their division of male and female qualities and emphasis upon sexual difference. She subverts orthodox readings of complementarity as a thinly veiled manifesto for female submission and inferiority, however, with a stress upon male sacrifice that borders upon self-annihilation. The poem "Me in Thee" provides a strong example of this idea:

One unto his Beloved came,
And knocked and called upon her name;
And from within a voice, full sweet,
That made his heart to music beat,
Cried, "Who is there?"
And low, he made reply,
'Love, it is I'
But the voice spake in chill despair,
'No room within this narrow hut
For thee and me'.
And lo, immutably
The door was shut.

Then that sad lover fled away,
And wept and fasted night and day
In desert places, making prayer,
Nor saw the kindly face of men.
And after many days again
To the beloved's door he came,
And knocked and called upon her name;
And from within a voice thereto
Cried, 'Who is there?'
And he, whom love had taught, replied,

'It is thyself'. And lo,
The door was opened wide.[155]

Not until the "sad lover" recognises the need to immerse his own being in that of hers, is the door "opened wide". There is a sense of course in which this poem could be interpreted on a more metaphysical level, highlighting the need for self-denial in order to enter the kingdom of God, although this would imply the radical presence of a female Christ. As I will demonstrate in Chapter 8, this was not such an improbable concept for Hopkins as might be assumed.

6.8 REVISING THEMES IN CHRISTIAN MANLINESS.

Commentaries on Christian manliness were primarily concerned to counter dominant perceptions of Christianity as a cowardly, unattractive proposition for men.[156] Hopkins' work was no exception. "Our Christianity is so feeble, so negative" she complained, "so peeping and peering and full of fears for itself, so wanting in bold heroic outlines and strong passions that it has little power over young men".[157] When purity feminists wrote about masculinity, they formed part of a long and well-developed tradition of apologists who were concerned to commend the faith to those more impressed by secular codes of physical strength and vigorous gamemanship. As the Baptist preacher Charles Spurgeon, declared, "There has got abroad a notion, somehow, that if you become a Christian you must sink your manliness and become milksop".[158]

Hopkins sought to resolve this dilemma by describing Christ in terms that proffered an attractive, compelling male figure whilst simultaneously elevating her own unique definition of self-sacrificing manhood to the status of divinity. As the incarnation of perfect manliness - "He who came quite as much to reveal man as to reveal God" [159] - Christ was both heroic leader of men and compassionate, loyal friend to women. Once again the unifying factor between these two poles was the motif of chivalry. Hopkins portrayed Christ as a knightly warrior who, inspired by "His love for His blessed

mother, by His great Saviour's passion for the weak and defenceless", [160] called men to battle against the satanic forces of impurity. In her pamphlet *The Man with the Drawn Sword* (1896), he appeared against the sky as "larger than human",[161] leading Joshua and the Israelites against the "impregnable city of Jericho"[162] - an obvious metaphor for sexual vice. This representation of the apocalyptic Christ as God's militant Love, the "Captain of the Host" with "sword drawn in his hand"[163] is effectively contrasted elsewhere with Jesus, the gentle advocate of women. Reverence for womanhood and purity of thought and action also characterized his life. He made a prostitute his closest friend and suffered women "to minister to His human needs".[164]

> It was to a woman that His last words were offered on the cross, and the first words were spoken of His risen life...Nothing in the life of the true Man on earth stands out in more marked features than...His faith in women; as if to stamp it for ever as an attribute of all true manhood, that without which a man cannot be a man.[165]

The churches' involvement in social purity prompts careful revision of those interpretations of Victorian masculinity which outline a discernible and relentless shift away from the creed of "godliness and good learning" to the secular cult of athleticism. According to historians of masculinity like Norman Vance, James Mangan and James Walvin, the end of the century witnessed the evolution of the "somewhat controversial and sometimes confusing phenomenon of muscular Christianity" [166] into a male ideal which ultimately exaggerated physical brawn at the expense of the Christian faith. Because of the intellectual vulnerability of the original synthesis, manliness "came gradually to be divorced from religion and found itself securely anchored in an obsessive love of games".[167]

Purity feminists like Hopkins were writing during the peak of the consolidation and expansion of public school ideologies of athleticism. Commitment to sporting activity, what Vance has described as the "tyranny of games", [168] was indeed a significant means

of defining the manly ideal and one that repeatedly displaced religion as the focus of male adolescent worship. But the firmly Christocentric framework of purity definitions of manhood demonstrate that the shift from "godliness to manliness" was not exhaustive.[169] Rather, religious and secular ideologies co-existed in the late-Victorian period, overlapping and conflicting in emphases. Both the cult of athleticism and the campaign for male purity coincided in their consecration of the body as a "living sacrifice"[170] offered in the service of God and Empire. When Hopkins advocated vigorous exercise, fresh air and stoic endurance against the temptations of sensual indulgence for example, she echoed many of the neo-Spartan values commonly associated with ideologies of sporting prowess.

But here the similarities end. Against the tough, self-assured Imperial Man trained in the harsh, competitive Darwinian world of the English public school, Hopkins offered a kenotic, self-negating vision of "true manhood". Indeed, she decried the "element of coarseness, brutality, and oppression of the weak which still obtains in many of our schools" as the very antithesis of Christian manliness, "as unmanly, ungentlemanly, and above all, un-English".[171] Chivalrous sacrifice for women, she explained, required not the individualistic pursuit of self-glorification, but total disempowerment before Christ, a heroic self-purging attained through "the consuming fire of perfect Love".[172] In his article on "Domesticity and Manliness in the Victorian Middle Class" John Tosh has argued that after the 1860s many middle-class men distanced themselves from home and hearth in the most literal way possible, by going overseas. This "flight from domesticity"[173] and denigration of home life was much in evidence in recruitment campaigns for the colonies at the turn of the century. The Empire beckoned young men into the armed services and colonial administration, as the popular fiction of Kipling and Henty was projecting all-male communities as the focus of firm friendship and thrilling adventures.[174] Against this trend, and at a time when concern over delayed marriages was increasingly connected with levels of prostitution, Hopkins prioritized the alternative values of Christian family life and the emotionally satisfying roles of husband and father.

Hopkins' concern to purify the public sphere led to a transference of the feminine values of the private realm onto the public world of male conduct. In championing the domestic virtues of moral purity, service and compassion she proffered a Tennysonian ideal of "manhood fused with female grace".[175] This was no envisioning of an androgynous utopia, for the distinction between the sexes was maintained too firmly for that. Rather, Hopkins' union of "tenderness with strength"[176] witnessed in her description of Christ anticipates a desire for men to assimilate within a masculine self-image the best qualities of womanhood. Vance has shown that many Victorian religious painters and apologists of Christian manliness similarly incorporated the characteristics of male and female genders in their description of Christ.[177] Thomas Hughes' *The Manliness of Christ* (1879) is probably the most notable example of a simultaneous definition of Christ and masculinity that embraces courage and heroism alongside compassion and "the sublimity of self-sacrifice".[178]

While Hopkins was not alone in her "feminization" of manhood, her overall agenda of a shared standard of sexual morality was quite distinct from that of male commentators. Female social purists exerted pressure upon prevailing definitions of manliness so as to eradicate male sexual degradation of women. The metaphor of chivalry leant itself well to this end. The depiction of men as noble, heroic protectors of their mothers, wives, sisters and daughters was a discursive device seductive enough to inspire action, yet sanitized enough to allay fears of impropriety. Ultimately, the concept of chivalry did little to challenge women's domestic confinement and in this sense the liberative potential of its message was limited. But in its emphasis on respect for womanhood and protection from sexual abuse, the discourse of the "true knights of God" facilitated a radical deconstruction of male sexuality and a thorough redefinition of male moral behaviour.

To contend for a distinctively feminine definition of late Victorian masculinity would be premature. Yet Hopkins' instrumental didactic role via the edifice of the WCA

demonstrates that doctrines of Victorian Christian manliness were deciphered not only through the exigencies of class or nation, but also through the gender of the expositor. When interpreting nineteenth-century doctrines of masculinity therefore, both content and author should be subject to gender analysis. As the recipients of divergent cultural codes of manly conduct, women too had a major stake in their construction.

In Part Four, the concluding part of this thesis, my discussion of Hopkins' marriage theory in Chapter 7 brings together her constructions of femininity and masculinity in a fitting consummation of the ideal of sexual purity. As the sacralized site of human reproduction, Hopkins combines sexually aware womanhood with a self-sacrificing manhood to produce a surprisingly sensual vision of the matrimonial union. Finally, in Chapter 8, I assess the radical theological ramifications of Hopkins' discourse on gender.

Part Four

MAN AND WOMAN OR, THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL": GENDER AND THEOLOGY IN THE LATE NINETEENTH-CENTURY

CHAPTER 7:

A SACRAMENT OF PASSION: MARRIAGE AND SEXUAL RELATIONS IN THE LATER WORK OF ELLICE HOPKINS

7.1 MARRIAGE, FEMINISM AND THE CHURCH IN THE LATE-NINETEENTH CENTURY.

In 1888 the *Daily Telegraph* published a series of articles by the journalist Mona Caird entitled "Is Marriage a Failure?", and asked readers to comment. Some 27,000 letters were received by the editor. This lively response typified the popular "debate over marriage" which reached a peak during the late 1880s and 1890s, stimulated by daily news of conjugal discord from the new divorce courts.[1] Growing evidence exposed the fallibility of the matrimonial tie, shattering fundamental assumptions of sexual propriety. Public fears over the breakdown of marriage were exacerbated by the generally volatile state of ideologies of gender including the outcry over prostitution, the unabated problem of "redundant women", the crisis over masculinity, and the male "flight from domesticity". In addition, the increasing number of women choosing to remain single and childless meant that matrimony remained a topic of constant scrutiny throughout the period. Construed by the churches as a bulwark against the prevailing climate of sexual anarchy, marriage was simultaneously subjected to a variety of damaging indictments by feminists and radical intellectuals who railed against the indissolubility and iniquitous conditions of this domestic seat of patriarchal tyranny.

Purity feminist readings of marriage exhibited a complex synthesis of religious and feminist principles as they shifted their focus from prostitution and male sexual abuse outside of the matrimonial tie to the moral purity of family life and the more sensitive area of private sexual relations between wife and husband. Hopkins upheld orthodox Christian marital theories whilst arguing for an adaptation of patriarchal authority within the home through her vision of domesticated manhood. As I will show in this chapter,

the ideological tensions at work within her understanding of marriage produced a creative and surprisingly progressive reading of marital sexual culture.

Religious leadership continued to affirm the significance of holy matrimony as a veritable bastion of moral and social stability throughout the century. As *The Vanguard* declared in 1889, "The Church's marriage rite has yet to become more popular and more sought after, and made more impressively sacred....The marriage service should be crowded with devout witnesses, a bright and happy solemnity for all".[2] Although Anglican doctrine propagated the matrimonial union as "the key to Christian socialization",[3] the erosion of ecclesiastical jurisdiction and authority in this area had been momentous. The Owenite Socialists prompted an early shaking of the foundations in the 1830s with their progressive demands for civil marriage, divorce and freer unions. But it was the Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Act of 1857 which fractured irrevocably the concept of a sacramental, indissoluble marital union. The eradication of the dual court system and the relocation of divorce within the civil sphere sent a clear signal to the churches that spiritual considerations in marriage were now of secondary importance to secular concerns over property transmission and inheritance. As John Kent has pointed out, "non-clerical opinion increasingly held that in sexual matters the law should reflect a consensus built on more than Christian assumptions derived from the Bible".[4]

The Divorce Act formed the mainstay of ecclesiastical disputations over marriage for the remainder of the century. Ambivalent scriptural evidence harnessed by opposing clerical factions provoked passionate but non-productive policy decisions at hierarchical levels of debate. Painstaking exegetical attempts such as the Dean of Lichfield's *The History of Marriage* (1894) sought to provide irrefutable historical evidence for the doctrinal permissibility or otherwise of divorce, discernment between guilty and innocent parties, conditions for re-marriage and the administration of the sacraments to divorcees. But these issues were already minor technicalities in a wider debate that had dramatically

shifted its terms of reference. Religious neglect of the demands of social and cultural realism, or what Dean Luckock dimissively referred to as the "laws of expediency",[5] meant that the theological intricacies of episcopal debates surrounding marriage and divorce had fast become politically incidental.[6]

While churchmen pondered the biblical obscurities of marital dissolution, feminists punctuated the decades with a hydra-headed critique of marriage, exposing a range of inequalities relating to property ownership, access to divorce and child custody.[7] Philippa Levine has explained that "the high incidence of marriage and its centrality in women's lives...made it an obvious and important feminist concern".[8] Marriage remained the normative Victorian female experience, conferring status, respectability and social acceptance upon over 80% of women from all classes.[9] Educated and trained from birth for the roles of wife and mother, marriage was every woman's cultural destiny, yet one that underlined female inferiority unequivocally through the legal system of coverture.[10] The Divorce Act failed to satisfy feminist interests any more than it had those of the clergy. Gender and class-based limitations of initial marital legislation meant that divorce remained primarily a tool for privileged male use until well into the following century. [11] However, legal victories equalizing married women's property rights with those of single women and achieving greater parity of grounds for divorce between males and females were gained by the 1890s, albeit with frustrating circuitousness.[12] The exposure of injustice in one area of marriage inevitably lead to a closer scrutiny of related issues and criticisms. Building upon the confident platform erected by their mid-century predecessors, late-Victorian feminists went beyond the economic and political iniquities of marriage to an articulation of the sexual and physical constraints of the conjugal bond.

There was, as James Hammerton has suggested, a "virtual industry of marital prescription"[13] throughout the nineteenth-century directed towards the elusive goal of marital harmony. Devoted churchwomen were key contributors to this literary genre. As

the seminal work of Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall has shown, the early-Victorian domestic idyll was defined and clarified by popular female exponents such as Mrs Sarah Stickney Ellis, Ann Taylor and Elizabeth Sandford.[14] The marriage advice literature of the female purity worker, although responding to a different set of problems, continued earlier preoccupations with the tension between women's domestic moral influence and their political invisibility, and constructed a domestic ideal grounded in sexual difference and the complementary qualities of chivalrous manhood and "compliant femininity".[15] In conjunction with her demand for greater sex education for women, Hopkins urged the inculcation of marital sexual purity through "definite teaching on the true nature, the sanctity and the beauty of marriage". [16] A natural extension of her desire to advance a single standard of sexual chastity, Hopkins' reflections upon matrimonial concord raised a variety of salient problems including the dynamics of sexual power within marriage and women's right to bodily autonomy. In the following section I first outline her sacramental understanding of the conjugal bond.

7.2 THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE: THEOLOGICAL, RACIAL AND FEMINIST CONSIDERATIONS.

Like her Anglican colleagues, Hopkins sought to counter increasingly secularized interpretations of the matrimonial tie with an orthodox religious reading of its sacramental status.

> If marriage be not a sacrament, an outward and visible sign of an inward an spiritual life and grace, I ask what is?
>
> Marriage is no mere contract to be broken or kept according to the individual contractor's convenience...but a sacramental union of love and life, with sacramental grace given to those who will seek it to live happily and endure nobly within its sacred bonds.[17]

Her theory of marriage as a sacrament was inspired by an understanding of the marital

union as the primary analogy for the divine-human encounter. Contracts were for use in the purchase of machinery or business transactions, she argued caustically, not for the indissoluble union of two spiritual and moral beings which was "the very type of the union of the soul with God [and] of Christ with His Church".[18] Not only had Christ used marriage as a symbol of his eternal and imperishable relationship with the church, he had consecrated the rite of matrimony with his divine presence at a wedding banquet.[19] The early Reformers' rejection of the Catholic teaching on the sacramental nature of marriage was thus a cause for great regret to Hopkins, for it was precisely this "which ha[d] made so many Protestant nations tend to that freedom of divorce which is...a laxity fatally undermining the sanctity and stability of the family". [20]

At times, Hopkins' defence of marriage assumed a heavily abstracted symbolism. This was particularly apparent in passages analogizing the marital tie with the well-being of the nation. Here, the concept of married life superseded a simple description of the relationship between two people and became a metaphor for the maintenance and reinvigoration of a healthy moral and political climate. As with her correlation of pure manhood and imperial advance, the institution of matrimony was portrayed as a vehicle for national stability. It could also exert its own powerful retributive logic against morally and sexually transgressive citizens. While the qualities of permanence, fidelity and duty were adhered to, the rock of matrimony would continue to regenerate the very fabric of personal and social life, but once stumble upon this rock she warned, "rebel against it, attempt to drag it down and cast it from its place, and it will crush you, and grind some part of your higher nature to powder". [21]

Hopkins' depiction of the subversion of Christian marital principles as a veritable national catastrophe illustrates the propensity of social purity ethics towards later theories of racial health and eugenics.[22] Fears of national degeneracy and the pivotal relationship between family and state were likewise axiomatic in a Lambeth Conference pronouncement of 1888 - "Wherever marriage is dishonoured and the sins of the flesh

are lightly regarded, the home life will be destroyed, and the nation itself will sooner or later decay and perish".[23] When a nation expressed its tolerance of sexually anarchic behaviour, be it divorce, prostitution or adulterous relationships, it became morally and politically endangered. In this way Hopkins accounted for the historic fall of the Roman Empire "honeycombed...by moral corruption and sexual vice", to the Teutonic races who, despite their pagan, barbaric origins "strongly discountenanced...impurity before marriage".[24] Divorce suits and illegitimate unions she concluded, were little more "moral sewers laid on to the whole nation, poisoning the deepest springs of its life, and through that polluted life producing far more individual misery than it endeavours to remedy in dissolving an unhappy marriage".[25]

Gill has argued that the Anglican hierarchy's insistence upon the sacramental character of marriage was problematic in that it prevented meaningful acknowledgement of the social, emotional and economic pressures incumbent upon the realities of married life.[26] In Hopkins' work the disjunction between theory and practice was less sharply defined. Her theological defence of the sanctity of marriage was refined not only by considerations of racial purity, but by a gender-based pragmatism which recognised only too well the economic and legal fragility of married women's existence. Her main anxiety concerning divorce was revealed when she explained to her female audience that "the sooner we realise for ourselves and our girls that any relaxation of the marriage bond will in its disastrous consequences fall upon us and not upon men, the better".[27] This female-identified basis of Hopkins' marital sexual politics brought together her inherent distrust of aggressive male sexuality and her desire to protect women from its worst excesses. Only "innate misery" would result from the weakening of the marital union she declared.

> It is the man who is more variable in his affections than the woman, more constant as she is by nature, as well as firmly anchored down by the strength of her maternal love. It is therefore on the woman that any loosening of the permanence of the marriage tie will chiefly fall in untold suffering.[28]

According to Hopkins, the Christian ideal of monogamistic permanency of union offered women the greatest measure of economic justice and security. Reflecting on the daunting financial and social ramifications of separation, she argued that marriage at least ensured a woman's "stability to her right of maintenance after she has given up her means of support [and] the stability of her right to the care of her own children"[29] Even the French agreed that "le mariage c'est la justice"[30] she observed, an emphatic point indeed in the light of her usual association of French literature and custom as the height of moral depravity. Despite its seeming advocacy of the surrendering of personal fulfilment to practical considerations, Hopkins' prudent advice can, I believe, be interpreted as a genuine concern for the legal and personal welfare of married women, rather than as a simple antifeminist acquiescence to the status quo. In the light of the dominant sexual double standard and the lack of full economic independence for married women, many feminists regarded freer unions or divorce as of more benefit to the erring husband than the vulnerable wife. As one correspondent argued in the feminist journal *Shafts,* divorce, not unlike prostitution, meant "licence for the man and disgrace and desertion for the woman".[31] Confronted with the reality of the current situation, feminists campaigned for changes in the divorce law that would at least eliminate the dual morality of the original 1857 legislation. But many continued privately to oppose its democratization in any form as morally abhorrent and practically exploitative of the wife and mother.[32]

7.2.i Delayed marriages, prostitution and materialism.

Throughout the late nineteenth-century, patterns of marriage were substantially affected by economic considerations. All sectors of middle-class society, from the lowest income groups to the affluent professional classes delayed the timing of marriage in an effort to maintain inflated standards of living and establish financial stability. The inability to afford the trappings of respectable domestic life with its increasing levels of conspicuous consumption not only prohibited early marriage, but prevented many from marrying at all. As Jane Lewis has remarked, throughout the considerable correspondence in the press on the subject of deferred marriage, "prudence and postponement [were]...the key

words in the discussion".[33]

Hopkins' critique of the excessive materialism surrounding matrimonial rituals and their subsequent deferral was informed by its impact upon the perpetuation of prostitution. Recording a relative's remark to her that "no girl can marry comfortably and live in London with less than a thousand a year", Hopkins replied that "if this be so, then it means the degradation of women writ large".[34] The connection between delayed marriages and the need for an outcast class of women was a well-recognized one. It had been used by regulationists in their case for legalized prostitution. Temporary recourse to the prostitute argued Acton, was an unavoidable consequence of the sexual urgency of the financially prudent young man. Feminists like Hopkins accepted the analysis that linked prostitution and marriage as two sides of the same economic coin, but rejected outright the regulationist's fatalistic solution. Referring to Acton's analysis Hopkins commented, "the daughters of working-men, according to this writer, are good enough as fleshly stop-gaps to be flung aside when a sufficient income makes the true wife possible - an honourable proceeding indeed!"[35] Nor was she unaware of the ramifications of the elevated model of the sexless, spiritualized angel-wife upon the continued need for a prostitute class of women *after* marriage had taken place. As the historian W.E.H. Lecky has commented in the classic Victorian statement on the dichotomous model of nineteenth-century female sexuality, the prostitute was "ultimately the most efficient guardian of virtue. But for her the unchallenged purity of countless happy homes would be polluted".[36] Hopkins' anti-dualistic construction of womanhood was an attempt to overcome this unacceptable ethical dilemma in which society tolerated "basing the purity of the Christian home on the ruined bodies and souls of the children of the poor".[37] As illustrated in Chapter 5, she was equally critical of women who adhered to this male-imposed ideology so as to protect their own moral purity, convinced that "were it not for the existence of an outcast class, no respectable woman would be safe, and we could not ensure the purity of the home".[38]

Hopkins' aversion to the reductionist account of matrimony as a business enterprise bore strong theoretical resemblances to Cicely Hamilton's celebrated text *Marriage as a Trade* (1909). Like the playwright and suffragist Hamilton, she viewed current marital norms as responsible for the increasing commodification of not just the prostitute, but of all young women. *Marriage as a Trade* was a biting critique of the way in which through lack of alternative choices, women were socialized into a subservient flattery of men in order to advance their career prospects as wives.[39] Written at the height of the struggle for suffrage, Hamilton was prepared to develop the logic of her argument more radically than Hopins, as shall be seen. Yet Hopkins' analysis, composed ten years earlier is still full of perceptive insights. Too prized for its economic and social value as opposed to its spiritual and companionate benefits, she believed that the sacramental status of marriage was under serious threat from the grossly inflated living standards of the middle and upper-classes. Decadent lifestyles and the "vulgar ambition of following the last social fashion, and doing as our neighbours do"[40] constituted yet another source of female exploitation and objectification. The notion of the perfect wife had become increasingly "leisured, elegant, and above all, expensive",[41] and marriage little more than a trade in female livelihood.

In a passage unusually sympathetic towards the male perspective, she contended that eager young girls paraded as mere items of sexual property had become such "expensive articles" that young men "simply dare not indulge in them".[42] Women had a particular responsibility for the remedying of this moral predicament, particularly "the old match-making mammas, exposing her wares in the marriage market to be knocked down to the highest bidder".[43] Small wonder that young men should "seek in their luxurious clubs the comfort which they should find in a home of their own".[44] Did women really think that "this multitude of unmarried men [we]re all monks without the cowl, and...the tonsure?"[45] By setting such exorbitantly high expectations upon the cost of marriage, mothers were ministering to the continuation of their own daughters' sexual and social exploitation, as well as that of the prostitute's.

Despite her assertion that "for the ordinary woman" it was "the happiest state",[46] Hopkins did not regard marriage as essential for female individuation. As explained in Chapter 3, she defended her own celibate status and that of other women in terms of active discipleship for Christ. In *The Power of Womanhood* she elaborated further upon the female single life:

> Some women are called to be mothers of the race, and to do the social work which is so necessary to our complex civilization. Some women may feel themselves called to some literary or artistic pursuit, or some other profession, for which they require the freedom of unmarried life.[47]

Hopkins did not politicize spinsterhood in the same way as later feminist writers. For active suffragists such as Hamilton and Christabel Pankhurst, spinsterhood was a categorical political rejection of and response to the enslaved sexual and social conditions of the wife and mother.[48] Hopkins' sacramentalist understanding of marriage meant that she could never prioritize female celibacy above the matrimonial tie. Yet she was outspoken in her support of the abandonment of marriage as exclusive lifestyle and determinant for women, particularly with regard to those courtship rituals that perceived young girls and women solely in terms of their sexuality. Thus we find her in complete agreement with a major thrust of feminist campaigns surrounding marital reform - the demand for the ability of women to build themselves an identity and career *outside* of marriage.

> The masculine view that marriage is the one aim and end of a woman's existence is now exploded.Young men are no longer led to look upon young girls that they meet as furtively, to use a vulgarism, 'setting their cap' at them, and only too ready to fling herself at their feet.[49]

For Hopkins, the yardstick of sexual purity was measured not by middle-class definitions of financial respectability and ostentatious propriety, but by the eradication of all forms of female sexual debasement. The solution was simple. Present marital customs were a

central contributory factor in the ongoing exploitation of women and through their perpetuation of prostitution were countermanding the rescue work of many refuges and training homes. As such, marriage was in need of radical re-definition and transformation.

7.2.ii Re-envisioning the marital division of labour.

Elaine Showalter has commented on the proliferation of feminist utopian writings at the end of the century in which women speculated upon a future world of sexual equality.[50] Many of these "utopias" she remarks were innately practical, concerned more with marital division of labour and the care of children than with "anarchy, revolt or matriarchal rule".[51] Yet some radical schemes were proffered. Jane Hume Clapperton's *Margaret Dunne, or a Socialist Home* (1885) detailed a communal home in which women and men shared equally in the housework. The American feminist Charlotte Perkins Gilman devised a system of institutionalized childcare that would enable working mothers greater freedom.[52] Hopkins' reconceptualization of the practical outworkings of marriage, whilst not as fully articulated as many of these schemes, was a radical utopian anti-capitalist critique of prevailing standards of domestic decadence. In 1870 Mary Hume-Rothery had written to Gladstone's Liberal government of the need to raise men and women "above the grovelling materialism of handsome houses, slothful ease and sensual indulgence".[53] In a similar vein Hopkins declared, "We must set ourselves to make our lives simpler and plainer, and oppose the ever-increasing luxury and love of pleasure, with its...relaxed moral fibre...dangerously delaying the possibility of marriage".[54] Only a marked simplification of lifestyle would solve the problem of deferred marriages and thereby eradicate a major causal factor in the maintenance of prostitution.

> ...if we are to prevent, or even lessen, the degradation of women...to stay the seeds of moral decay in our own nation, we must be content to revolutionize much in the order of our own life, and adopt a lower and simpler standard of living.[55]

Hopkins knew that her suggestions would prove controversial and unpopular with the wealthier members of her female readership, for they implied the reduction of expense on dress, entertainment and travelling, as well as the implementation of a more frugal diet. Yet she was convinced that "the hardships of a smaller income and a larger life"[56] were better suited to woman's nature and potential for happiness, as well as being a more authentic reflection of the sanctity and moral purity of marriage. The eclecticism of her faith and scope of religious influences allowed Hopkins to integrate both High Anglican and Puritan theories in her re-visioning of marriage. The fact that scholars have normally juxtaposed these two models renders her synthesis all the more interesting. In the light of her attraction to seventeenth-century Puritan divines such as Richard Baxter and Jeremy Taylor, James T. Johnson's comparative study of High Church and Puritan marriage doctrines during this period is particularly germane.[57] According to Johnson, High Churchmen looked to the injunction of Genesis 1:28 "to be fruitful and multiply" as the principal proof-text when defining the essence of marriage. For Puritans, the definitive text was Genesis 2:18 - "And the Lord God said, 'It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a help meet'".[58] Hopkins combined the High Church emphasis upon procreation with the Puritan companionate model in her late-Victorian account of the marital union. Whereas the former theme was more dominant in her interpretation of marital sexuality, as I will later illustrate it was upon the distinctively Puritan values of simplicity, piety, companionship and diligence that she formulated her prescriptive account of the day-to-day division of labour in marriage.

Hopkins' portrayal of the domestic ideal typified the Puritan model of "meethelps" and the notion of the Christian household as a united partnership or venture. Her matrimonial paradigm evoked pre-industrialized gender roles with women and men yoked together in equal toil and hardship. Reconstructing a "golden age" of female activity, she recalled the multiplicity of tasks that evolved upon women of earlier generations, duties that were now "shunted upon servants and tradesmen",[59] such as weaving, spinning, pickling and preserving, brewing, baking and medicinal skills. She believed that the problem of

"surplus women" was a direct outcome of the passive, ancillary role currently allotted to the female sex. Contemporary ideological resistance to allowing girls "to rough it with husbands and brothers, or to endure the least hardness"[60] had created a demographic imbalance which, she contended, would never rectify itself while only boys were sent out into the world to work and fight.

From Hopkins' derisory comments about the ornamental Victorian wife, it is clear that she regarded the accentuated division between male activity and female passivity as an aberration of the ordained matrimonial order. Traditional patriarchal paradigms of marriage in which the husband wielded unchallenged authority over his docile wife and children were rejected by her in favour of a more mutual, egalitarian ideal. The shift from patriarchal to more companionate forms of matrimony has long been debated by historians. Lawrence Stone's familiar theory of the Victorian revival of patriarchal marriage as "a short-term interruption to the more fundamental companionate transition",[61] presenting the two models as "stark opposites",[62] has recently been challenged by James Hammerton who has argued instead that these paradigms constantly overlapped and embodied aspects of the other. Hammerton's theory is particularly apposite to an assessment of Hopkins' domestic ideal, suggesting an "adaptation of patriarchal power and authority"[63] within late-Victorian companionate marriages in which the husband became more intimately involved with family affairs and leisure-time. As indicated in Chapter 6, Hopkins' construction of chivalrous masculinity was driven towards precisely this domesticated, "feminized" paragon.

What appeared as a revolutionary proposal for the abolition of the separate spheres ideology in terms of its distribution of labour manifested itself in rather more ambiguous terms as Hopkins outlined her concept of exemplary wifehood. Practical household management skills such as nursing, sewing and sensible cooking were essential training for upper-class girls "so that they may be fitted to become the wives of men of modest incomes".[64] Not only would this enable women to marry on a smaller budget, but "if

from any circumstances they prefer unmarried life, it would open up to them as a means of livelihood many positions for which they are now totally unfitted".[65] From this description Hopkins evidently did not aim to eliminate the sexual division of labour within marriage, but rather to balance up the burden of what she described as "necessary drudgery".[66] Harder-working and more resourceful, women still retained primary responsibility for the private, domestic sphere. Aimed as it was at the higher echelons of society, however, this was controversial advice, demanding the sacrifice of the "fine lady ideal"[67] in favour of a single code of assiduity for women and men.

7.3 HOPKINS AND THE NEW WOMAN.

The animated debate over marriage and marital relations during the 1880s was stimulated to a great extent by the rise of the "new woman" novel. Well-educated, economically independent and sexually autonomous, "new women" writers like Mona Caird, Olive Schreiner and Eleanor Marx disparaged traditional feminine stereotypes and committed their writings to an exploration of alternative marital strategies.[68] Outspoken defiance of sexual norms in both their literature and their personal lives made them an immediate stalking-horse for cultural *angst,* as was the prostitute before them. Subjected to cruel caricatures by the media, they were described as "feminine Frankensteins" and "alien vampires".[69] Hopkins' depiction of them as desexed androgynes sporting a "virile shirt-front...manly neck-tie, turned-up collar [and] male knickerbockers"[70] was a common abuse of these "advanced" women. As Showalter has observed the "new woman" was "an anarchic figure who threatened to turn the world upside down" and reign over "a wild carnival of social and sexual misrule".[71]

Opposition from religious commentators was hostile, though not well-informed, and Hopkins' moral offensive against the immensely popular "new woman" fiction fell prey to a range of contemporary prejudices and misconceptions. Her conflation of self-centred decadence and lust with the *modus operandi* of the "new woman" was grounded in a

framework which failed to differentiate between the female "new woman" novelist's critique of the sexual double standard and that of progressive male writers such as Grant Allen or George Gissing who focused on the hedonistic benefits of women's sexual freedom for men.[72] Nevertheless, it is not difficult to see how Caird's advocacy of voluntary unions entered into freely by individuals outside of Church or state interference would have directly countered Hopkins' sacramental image of the indissoluble marital bond. [73]

Caird's article "A Defence of the So-Called Wild Women" which appeared in the May edition of *The Nineteenth Century* (1892) provoked an antagonistic response. Decrying the moral and economic absurdities of large families Caird declared that "the rights of the existing race are at least as great as those of the coming one. There is something pathetically absurd in this sacrifice to their children of generation after generation of grown people".[74] This was an insight on marital restraint not altogether uncongenial to Hopkins' sexual theory, as I will later show. Yet Hopkins chose to ignore the explicit neo-Malthusian basis of Caird's argument, interpreting it as a direct ridicule of the values of sexual fidelity. "I suggest that it would be still more pathetically absurd" she retorted in *The Power of Womanhood,* "to see the whole upward-striving past, the whole noble future of the human race, sacrificed to their unruly wills and affections, their passions and desires".[75] Transient unions and the "specious doctrine"[76] of individualistic passion propagated by modern writers was the very antithesis of the Christian ideal of self-sacrificing spousal love. To build a marriage on emotion or lust, rather than loyalty and duty, "with the unruly wills and affections of sinful men [was] to build, not on sand, but on the wind"[77] she argued. "New woman" fiction played upon the "romantic fantasies of young girls",[78] proffering vacuous promises of idyllic happiness. In the "search for the perfect partner" girls were no longer so inclined to "surrender their independence" unless a man was "a fairy prince, dowered with every possible gift".[79] More seriously, it undermined the Christian concept of marital obedience as "a service of perfect freedom", viewing it instead as a "slavish thing".[80] "There is nothing derogatory in the married

relation to the freest and fullest independence of character"[81] she declared, urging respectable mothers to use their influence against such secular falsehoods and to ensure that their daughters did not get their teaching "on marriage and matters of sex"[82] from unsuitable novels.

Hopkins believed, as did most feminists of the time, that family and career were essentially antithetical pursuits.[83] One could only advance at the cost of the other, and for the married woman and mother the home must always take precedence. Her image of the ideal wife as sensible, thrifty and diligent caused her to take issue with what she interpreted as the overly intellectualized, non-practical and sexually promiscuous lifestyle of the "new woman". It was, she jibed, damagingly akin to that of the tadpole's - "all head, no hands, and much active and frivolous tail".[84] Whilst she was not against the benefits of a classical education for women *per se* - she was, as she reminded her readers, "the daughter of a great mathematician and geologist"[85] - the establishment of a simpler, plainer lifestyle necessarily required the subordination of self-centred altruistic pursuits in favour of "higher and more practical issues".

> ...if dead languages are to take the place of living service; if high mathematics are to work out a low plane of household management; if a first class in moral science is to involve a third class performance of the moral duties in family life, then...I protest with the utmost earnestness against the care of human life...being considered a lower thing and of less importance than good scholarship.[86]

This limited vision of female education is difficult to reconcile with Hopkins' own exceptional intellectual ability. It appears to have been grounded in a moral pragmatism that was essentially anti-materialist, and genuinely desirous of the democratization of female opportunities. Thus she regarded the promulgation of voluntary liaisons as a consequence of the privileged class position of "advanced women", and of little relevance

to most. "The burthened [sic] mother of a family cannot compete in companionship with the highly-cultured young unmarried lady, with the leisure to post herself up in the latest interesting book or the newest political movement",[87] she warned, displaying a sensitive awareness of the economic and emotional vulnerability of the ordinary wife and mother.

Purity writings on marriage endeavoured to expose the moral disorder that would emerge from progressive interpretations of divorce or voluntary sexual liaisons and their detrimental effect upon the majority of women. For Hopkins the sole location of the right ordering of sexuality was within the matrimonial union - "every tie short of honourable marriage brings shame and disgrace on the woman" [88] she observed. Fiercely intolerant of any transient form of sexual relations that threatened to undermine the sacred permanency of the married state, female purity workers tiraded againt the growing presence of sexual unruliness with puritanical zeal. But to what extent was such censoriousness replicated when considering sex within marriage?

7.4 A SACRAMENT OF SEX: MARITAL RELATIONS.

Upon the basis of the cultural dominance of the separate spheres ideology, historians have conjectured that "many husbands and wives must have met in the marriage bed as two separate races".[89] Frank Mort has provided evidence from early-Victorian nonconformist handbooks on marriage and reproduction that mutual sexual satisfaction was important "for *both* parties".[90] As noted in Chapter 5, however, by the mid-Victorian period female sexuality had become defined against a normative absence of erotic desire. Respectable wives and mothers, revered for their piety and virtue, prudently adhered to the cultural myth of female sexual passivity as a necessary exchange for social status and security. How far they internalized this myth of course, is another matter. As I will demonstrate in this discussion, feminism, religious affiliation and definitions of sexual purity worked in unexpected ways upon the marital sexual culture of the late-nineteenth century.

Historical accounts of Christian teaching on marriage abound with theological formulations concerning the circumscription and regulation of sexual encounter.[91] Despite the post-Reformation elevation of the primacy of marriage, the orthodox Augustinian prescription of matrimony as the sole legitimate site for procreation and avoidance of fornication passed down into the nineteenth-century, with corresponding emphasis upon the conjugal debt. Conservative thinkers continued to stress the prophylactic function of marriage. Yet the negative doctrine of sexual containment formed only one strand of Victorian religious reflection upon marital sex. Theories of marriage as a sphere of sexual delight rather than as a mere remedy for concupiscence were increasingly articulated. The writings of Charles Kingsley, probably the century's most well-known exponent of a sexualized Christianity, were illustrative of this approach.[92]

Whereas Kingsley's religious sensualism was developed primarily in order to rationalize his own domestic experiences of sexual bliss with his wife Fanny, Hopkins' consideration of marital sexuality was prompted by less self-interested motives. Once again a synthesis of contemporary High Church and seventeenth-century Puritan marriage doctrines informed her reading. Central to the Puritan aspect was the work of the poet Milton. As Jean Hagstrum has shown, Milton's theory of paradisical sex and the erotic imagery found in *Paradise Lost* provided a highly acceptable mode of sexual expression in nineteenth-century respectable society.[93] Hopkins made clear her indebtedness to Milton on frequent occasions. In *The Secret and Method of Purity* she described his "Comus" as an "exquisite hymn to purity"[94] and a perfect example of the recognition of the affirmative, positive concept of sexual purity. Repudiating the traditional Augustinian correlation of Edenic sexuality with sinful lust, she expressed the joy of spousal intimacy in typically Miltonic terms as a glimpse into the "paradise of the ideal" and as "that last bit of Eden that is left to us in this poor, sinful sorrowful world".[95] Her observation upon "the purity of the Alpine peak, 'Rosy and rapt with lovely lights of heaven'" that could be found within the "loving Christian home" [96] was

surely an undisguised analogy for marital eroticism. In what amounted to a radical reversal of dominant theological scruples on human sexuality, she contemplated the pre-Fall perfection of the garden as a prototype of passionate matrimonial love where husband and wife gave "without stint or limit"[97] in their physical and spiritual devotion to each other. Only by aspiring to such a relationship, she suggested, could humanity regain its paradise lost.

Edmund Leites' examination of Puritan marriage theories is helpful to an understanding of how Hopkins' remarkably pro-sensual depiction of marital sexuality reconciled itself with the more austere qualities of sobriety, discipline and duty essential to the matrimonial tie.[98] According to Leites, the mutual comfort and support of one's spouse consisted of more than good will or dispassionate Christian benevolence in Puritan thought. Piety and sensual intimacy were closely interrelated with spontaneous, passionate sexual union between husband and wife also regarded as a primary duty of the companionate marriage.[99] Hopkins similarly regarded physical delight as an essential component of the comfort and friendship of the matrimonial bond. Romance, manifested not as transient lust or whimsical fantasy but as practical, tender care, constituted the mutual responsibility of both spouses.

It is in her discussion of marital relations that Hopkins' ideological constructions of the sexually knowledgeable woman and the self-sacrificing man come to a metaphorical and literal consummation. By analogising pre-marital sex with "bringing in the serpent", [100] she showed that it was not the sexual act itself, but the encounter engaged in *outside* of a permanent loving bond between woman and man that had brought about the fall of humanity. Marriage constituted the definitive boundary between the two states of sacred and profane, pure and impure sexual ardour. Hence, in marked contrast to her condemnatory attitude towards other forms of sexual activity, the pure affection of conjugal love was described by her as "the most sacred thing on earth".[101]

In her pamphlet *The Temple of the Eternal* (1899), Hopkins declared that the pleasures of the human body were both physical and sacramental. Her exaltation of matrimonial passion as a sacrament was a direct consequence of the sacralization of human reproductive abilities. According to Hopkins, the sexual act was heavily symbolic of God's relationship with humanity, for it was at this point that wife and husband approximated most closely the life-giving powers of the divine. In accordance with the grave responsibility of creation, the sexual organs were "the very shrine" [102] of the temple of the body, and the procreative impulse the pinnacle of God's gifts. Her construal of marital relations as a prefiguration of the blissful delights of heaven meant that her sexual discourse invariably assumed a spiritual cast:

> ...when the veil of the flesh is rent, and the soul is clothed with its spiritual body [then]...the love of God shall sum up our whole being, as married love sums up the whole bodily and spiritual being of this...state...and the soul will surrender herself once and for ever to the eternal Loveliness, as a bride surrenders herself in unutterable love to her husband.[103]

The connection between sexuality and spirituality was also illustrated in the work of Elizabeth Blackwell, who argued in *The Human Element in Sex* (1884) that those "who deny sexual feeling to women...quite lose sight of...[the] immense spiritual force of attraction which exists in so very large a proportion in their nature".[104] Like Blackwell, Hopkins' account of the sexual act tended towards the establishment of an anti-dualist continuum between the physical and spiritual union. The very purpose of sexual intercourse was the sanctification and elevation of fleshly bodies. As she wrote in *The Secret and Method of Purity,* "the....material is taken up and transfused into the divine, and gives rise to a union deeper and purer even than the communion of saints".[105]

7.4.i Non-consensual sex within marriage.

Despite her prioritization of the procreative aspect of marriage, Hopkins' effusive tenor regarding sexual relations was not limited to an uncritical advocacy of the biblical

injunction to "be fruitful and multiply". In tandem with mainstream feminist campaigns surrounding the physical dangers to women of perpetual involuntary childbirth, she maintained strong opposition to coercive forms of marital sexuality as an abhorrent extension of male sexual abuse. Non-consensual sex within marriage led feminist campaigners such as Cicely Hamilton to an unequivocal condemnation of married women's existence as "mere breeding machines".[106] Wolstenholme Elmy described the perils of enforced maternity as "a crime against the highest humanity".[107] Hopkins likewise pointed to the familiar sight of "wives with health broken down and life made a burden" and "possibly even premature death incurred by their being given no rest from the...duties of motherhood".[108] Against Acton's confidence in the willingness of the perfect wife to overcome her "mental repugnance for cohabitation"[109] and submit to the indiscriminate sexual demands of the husband, Hopkins' espousal of consensual sex was an explicit rejection of the traditional Christian concept of male "conjugal rights". Although she never censured marriage in such derogatory terms as Wolstenholme Elmy's "legalised prostitution",[110] she did invoke the law of moral purity against men who had indulged in premarital promiscuity. They would find it all the harder to exercise their duty of self-control as husbands she warned, whereas "the man who has kept himself pure before marriage...will think first of the health of the mother of his children, loving her and giving himself for her".[111]

Whether as a result of female health-related initiatives or male economic ones, the declining birthrate amongst the middle and upper-classes from the 1860s indicated an awareness and practice of family limitation techniques.[112] Few feminists desired the abandonment of the maternal impulse altogether, but argued instead for voluntary, purposed motherhood and a woman's right to abstain from sex. This did not include the sanctioning of artificial forms of contraception propagated by the disciples of neo-Malthusianism, however. On an ideological and ethical basis similar to the consensus against voluntary sexual liaisons, feminists considered such methods an instrument of

male service only and disempowering of women's procreative choices.[113] As the Unitarian F. W. Newman argued in a purity tract in 1889, "the philanthropic or economic plea of our...(Neo) Malthusian is very convenient to such a man - very dangerous to his wife".[114]

J. A. and O. Banks have observed that there was initially an "almost total boycott"[115] of this issue by feminists. Churches and social purity campaigners were equally antagonistic to the "awful heresy"[116] of artificial forms of birth-control as a profanation of the sanctity of the reproductive act. Not until the turn of the century did the Church begin to accept the dangers inherent "in the too rapid multiplication of the family"[117] and, like most feminists, advocate solely natural methods of voluntary self-restraint. In 1893, *The Christian World* declared that through the exercise of reasonable self-control and "certain easily understood physiological laws",[118] voluntary limitation was no longer considered as interfering with divine providence. Hopkins' assertion of the sanctity of the sexual act, emphasis upon the need for female sex education and marital sexual politics of protectionism had brought her to this position almost a decade earlier. In 1883, in *Man and Woman; or, the Christian Ideal,* she had attributed the perils of enforced motherhood to a blatant disregard of the fundamental Christian principle of chivalrous self-sacrificing masculinity:

> If you are married then remember the Christian ideal, that the husband is to love the wife and give himself for her...All that you have and all that you are you will hold for the good of the woman you love. And there will be one woman the less in England to fill an early grave, or have her constitution broken for life by having her children faster than her strength can bear. [119]

Sexual coercion or non-recipricocity was an anathema to Hopkins both as a violation of the sacramental status of the marital bond, and of the self-surrendering ideal of conjugal relations. Whether configured through the moral persuasiveness of purity rhetoric or as

an issue of individual rights, radical feminist and social purity discourse coalesces at this point with recommendations of male sexual restraint borne out of a common concern for the physical well-being of the married woman. When contemplating the extent to which certain feminists were prepared to develop their critique of sexual abuse within marriage, the pro-sensualism of Hopkins' purity feminism becomes more apparent still.

7.4.ii Pro-sensualism and anti-dualism in marital sexuality.

In her study of late nineteenth-century theories of sexual continence, Sheila Jeffreys has explained how one feminist solution to the problem of women's "bodily slavery"[120] was to promulgate the virtual eradication of the physical sexual encounter. Leading feminists like Frances Swiney (president of the Cheltenham branch of the NUWW), Elizabeth Wolstenholme Elmy and Margaret Sibthorp, editor of the journal *Shafts,* proffered alternative sexual philosophies such as theosophy and "psychic love" which stressed non-genital forms of passion except in cases of procreative necessity.[121] Along with Hopkins and the majority of purity feminists these women regarded sexual abuse as the root of all female oppression, but inferred from this that the female right to bodily integrity necessitated relationships with men that were completely free from the threat of penetrative sex. Appropriating a Spencerian theory of evolutionism Swiney predicted that as humanity progressed, "intercourse would only be practised for the purpose of reproduction, and then only at carefully spaced intervals under women's direction".[122] By way of contrast to the animalistic, brutal and degrading qualities of physical sex, the psychic nature of intimate relations which placed greater emphasis upon the mental element was proposed as evidence of a superior level of development.

Obscured by the use of heavy symbolism and ornate modes of discourse, scholars have been unable to interpret precisely what was meant by "psychic love".[123] It appears to have taken the form of an enraptured mental state approaching spiritual ecstasy. In Swiney's elaborate theosophical system she combined a spiritualized conception of

passion with an outright assertion of female supremacy and the eventual return to a matriarchal society. What Christ had really meant when he spoke about the unity of male and female in one flesh, she argued, was the disappearance of the male species altogether.[124] Wolstenholme Elmy's understanding of "psychic love" made no such grandiose metaphysical claims, but was similarly concerned with the progression from bestial, carnal oppression to more ethereal impulses between the sexes. Despite their varying designs, what bound these strategies together and distinguished them from Hopkins' theory of marital sex was their fundamental anti-corporeal slant. Wolstenholme Elmy's aim for example, was to release women from the "degradation of her temple to solely animal uses". [125] Margaret Sibthorp wrote in 1898 of sex as "that delight of the flesh which is most deadly to spirit life" which was "a phase through which the spirit passes in order to gain experience".[126]

This "body-transcendent" solution to the problem of female sexual abuse was a subtle, but all-important shift of emphasis from that of purity feminism's approach. The anti-sexual stance proffered by Wolstenholme Elmy, Swiney and others was entirely at odds with Hopkins' pro-sensual "body-affirming" theory of marital sexuality. Whereas their discussions of sexual continence maintained a rigid distinction between the body and the spirit, Hopkins sought to integrate this traditional philosophical dualism by stressing the close proximity of the two planes within marital love. Through the Pauline ethic of mutual consideration and spousal self-surrender, the female (and male) body was elevated and enshrined through the heightened ecstatic experience of reproductive sex. As I showed in Chapter 4, Hopkins' positive, sacramental reading of the body had originally been constructed over and against the dominant anti-female, anti-carnal mindset of the Anglican hierarchy and their attitude towards prostitution. Her desire to advance the value of human corporeality led her to view any denigration of the physical with great suspicion. Thus we find a fascinating constellation of attitudes here in which Hopkins expresses her consternation over an articulate, educated section of the female population

resorting to, albeit for very different reasons, precisely the selfsame denigration of human sexuality as that of her more conservative ecclesiastical colleagues:

> ...one most undesirable, and I may add unnatural result noticeable among the more advanced section [of women] is a certain distaste for marriage, a tendency to look upon it as something low and animal, which strikes me as simply a fatal attitude for women to take up.[127]

Hopkins castigated the intellectual "advanced woman" in terms not dissimilar to her refutation of traditional religious asceticism. There were indeed strong ascetic resonances in the body-denying attitude of feminist texts on sexual continence and "psychic love". On this basis, it can be surmised that the more extreme exponents of radical feminism such as Swiney, Sibthorp and Wolstenholme Elmy resorted back to a mind/body dualism with its potentially damaging effects for a positive image of female carnality, whereas Hopkins' brand of social purity feminism, so long considered the archetype of sexual prurience actually spearheads the campaign for active female sexual desire. As noted earlier, she did not work with a definition of sexual purity that required the purging of passion from the marital bed. Rather, she believed that the moment of creative sexual union between husband and wife was sacrosanct, providing humanity's greatest approximation of divine potential as co-creators of life.

Even those historians sharply critical of the conservatizing and repressive impact of the movement for social purity have acknowledged its achievement in successfully converting the sexual culture of the middle-classes to one of mutual, consensual marital sex. As Ellen Dubois and Linda Gordon have observed of women purity workers, "inasmuch as they believed that sexual drive and initiative were primarily male, they understood this as women's right to say no".[128] The discursive focus on sexual danger in addition to their vigorous campaigns surrounding female sex education meant that purity feminism at least "opened up new heterosexual expectations for middle-class women".[129]

Hopkins' use of spiritual terminology when describing sexual activity should not be confused with the sexual continence theorists. In the Christian marital ideal, reproductive sex was the direct route to conjugal bliss, whereas for the theosophists and advocates of "psychic love", sensual satisfaction occurred through a complete circumvention of the physical act. Yet there are clearly connections to be made in the proximity of the discourses regarding the transmutation of physical into spiritual passion. Much of late nineteenth-century feminism, whether Christian or post-Christian as in the case of Swiney and Wolstenholme Elmy, sought to endow sex with semi-mystical qualities. This not only provided women with a way out of associating marital sex with female abuse in the attempt to envision transformed relations between the sexes, it was also an effective linguistic device that allowed feminists continued visibility in the sexual political debate through exercising their orthodox cultural roles as custodians of the spiritual and moral domain.

The use of quasi-mystical language was a key characteristic of the highly complex and interwoven nature of late-Victorian feminist sexual politics. Women proffering very different strategies shared a common vocabulary that was essentially spiritual. Bland's examination of the intellectual Men and Women's Club which was established in the mid-1880s to promote detached enquiry into leading questions of gender and sexuality, demonstrates that despite an explicit commitment to "non-theological discussion" many of the female club-members ultimately acknowledged that religious discourse provided "a means of expressing emotions effectively prohibited by the language of scientific rationality".[130] The rationalist Annie Eastty for example, recorded feeling "'more and more indebted to the Club for the opportunity it has given me of discovering I am not so completely out of sympathy with a religious element in feeling as I thought I was'".[131]

Examples such as this indicate the complete interconnectedness of religious and sexual discourse at this time. The spiritualization of sexual language was not merely a prurient, kneejerk response to the indelicacy of the subject matter, or a romanticized apolitical

idealism proffered by the devout spinster unable to confront such controversial issues. Rather, in the search for a new language in the unexplored and uncharted territory of human sexual relations, religious or spiritual discourse proved a vital mode of expression. Re-visioning the ideal relationship, whether in marital or non-marital terms, necessitated a spiritualization of passion.

7.5 PURITY AND PASSION: THE RECONFIGURATION OF FEMALE SEXUAL DESIRE.

Throughout this chapter I have drawn attention to the various nuances of Hopkins' interpretation of marriage as a sacrament, arguing that interspersed with the orthodox qualities of her marital paradigm such as duty, obedience and fidelity, was a remarkably pro-sensual reading of conjugal relations. In earlier attacks against the double standard, mid-century feminist sexual politics had simply consolidated the passionless, chaste ideal of Victorian womanhood in order to claim a higher moral ground. Whilst Hopkins also employed this tactic in her appraisal of the prostitute's plight, purity feminism's additional focus on marital relations introduced a very different legitimating device. By endowing the sexual act with sacramental properties sanctioned by the authoritative weight of the Christian religious tradition, Hopkins provided an acceptable way for women to engage in sexual pleasure. Her emphasis upon the holiness of the marital union and the procreative act endowed women with superior redemptive qualities through their physiological capacity for childbirth, a conventional enough concept in itself, but one which simultaneously earned women a degree of affirmative sexual conduct. I would conclude from this that social purity feminism's sanctification of marital sexual discourse represented a subtle but perceptible shift in the defining of female sexuality from a passive to an active mode, albeit heavily circumscribed within heterosexual, middle-class and matrimonial limits.

Whether Hopkins' celebration of marital sex was anything more than a straightforward

equation of female sexuality with motherhood is difficult to assess as the texts themselves fail to distinguish between sex for the purposes of procreation and sex for pleasure only. As Michael Mason has argued in *The Making of Victorian Sexual Attitudes,* medical acknowledgment of the female sexual impulse was generally allied with the maternal instinct during the late nineteenth-century, with theories of the "utero-orgasm" reiterating the extent to which the possession of ovaries and womb influenced the entire physical and psychological status of woman. According to this doctrine it was "the sheer pleasureable intensity of the woman's orgasm which is functional reproductively".[132] A sexuality that was never disconnected from the uterus may appear a rather ambiguous advance for women. Yet, as Mason observes, procreation was the most significant dignifier of female eroticism throughout the Victorian era.[133]

Mason offers the striking and in the main convincing theory that Victorian anti-sensualist sentiment was driven by secular classical moralism as opposed to the traditionally posited forces of religious puritanism.[134] This argument adds credence to the underlying notion of this chapter that religious and pro-sensual discourses were not exclusive of each other in the latter decades of the century. The movement for social purity, so long appraised as the high water-mark of nineteenth-century prurience, propounded a moral code that, whilst unashamedly censorious towards extra-marital relations, contained within it a powerful strand of marital eroticism. As a major pedagogue of social purity Hopkins' affirmative representation of conjugal passion demands a revision, or at least a refinement of the complex relations between late-Victorian religious, feminist and sexual discourse. Whilst it is highly unlikely that she envisaged marital sexual pleasure outside of the reproductive experience, she did much to construct a domestic aura of love, concern and sympathetic sexual rapport that was highly conducive to the female anticipation of sexual pleasure. Like many female purity reformers, Hopkins' work was the quarry of her contemporaries' simplistic associations of religiosity and sexual prurience, yet it is evident from this chapter that accusations of pious prudery belied the radical implications of her sexual agenda.

CHAPTER 8:

"THE DIVINE MOTHER": CHRIST AND THE GENDER DEBATE.

8.1 THEOLOGY AND GENDER IN THE LATE NINETEENTH-CENTURY.

Throughout this thesis I have argued that the moral discourse of the social purity movement was a significant historical force in the production of gender knowledge. In this concluding chapter the theological ramifications of these constructions of gender will be examined. Purity feminists like Hopkins were extremely adept at the appropriation and subversion of dominant gender ideologies, transforming concepts such as female moral superiority and male protectionism into a cogent politicized device for the inauguration of a single standard of chastity. In the following discussions I will show how Hopkins' transposition of gender (essentially that of femininity) onto the divine level employed a similar process of adaptation, endowing traditional female metaphors of suffering and self-sacrifice with new theological meaning and symbolic significance.

It is vital that religion and gender historians do not omit the study of theology in their research. In 1985 the historian Elizabeth Fox-Genovese in a review article of the book by Rosemary Radford Ruether and Rosemary Keller (eds.),*Women and Religion in America: A Documentary History, Vols. I and II* (1981, 1983) concluded that the history of women and religion was in danger of falling "between the stools of feminist theology and the new social history".[1] In complying with the prevailing consensus of secular women's history and contemporary feminist consciousness Fox-Genovese contended, the discipline of women's religious history had "failed to develop questions and methods specific to its own concerns".[2] Ironically, an immediate casualty of this methodological vacillation was that of theology itself and the subsequent reduction of religion to "a simple reflection or determinant of society".[3] In the light of this judicious advice from a practitioner of secular women's history and in conjunction with my original emphasis on

the need for religion and gender history to identify its own distinctive epistemological boundaries, I conclude my thesis with a theological reading of purity discourse. Underpinning my discussion is a fundamental assumption of the affinity between theology - defined as an intellectual, critical reflection upon the encounter, experience and revelation of the divine - and the existing gender order.[4] Contemporary feminist scholarship has demonstrated unequivocally that in the reliance upon anthropomorphic images of God our conceptualization of ultimate reality is inextricable from considerations of gender. As Patricia Crawford has similarly argued for the early modern period, the "beliefs of both men and women about the divine...reflected and reinforced the dominant ideals of their society about the respective social positions of the two sexes".[5] As the correlation between Hopkins' construction of femininity - specifically the concept of female suffering - and the nature of Christ will indicate, the correspondence between gender and theology was no less pronounced in late-Victorian religious reflection.

The dominance of incarnational theology and a burgeoning interest in the historical life of Jesus led to an intensely human representation of Christ in late nineteenth-century art, theology and devotional literature. As Norman Vance has shown, commentators as religiously disparate as Thomas Carlyle and F. D. Maurice depicted the "humanly, heroic Christ, [as] type of toiling and suffering humanity, rather than ethereal icon".[6] Maurice was particularly influential in the propagation of an incarnate Christ who intervened and participated fully in human affairs. At the root of his social teaching lay the concept of "universal sonship under God and universal brotherhood in Christ",[7] a notion which, despite the gender-exclusivity of the language, elevated the dignity of the human form and the value of human social endeavour. It was Maurice for example, who inspired the robust physicality of the Kingsleyan Christ. In Thomas Hughes' *The Manliness of Christ* there are also strong Mauricean themes of "a vigorously human Christ and a vigorously humane Christianity opposed to ascetic otherworldliness and earnestly committed to work in the world".[8]

As noted in Chapter 3, incarnational theology dominated Anglican thinking from the 1870s onwards, taking as its rationale the doctrinal implications of God's assumption of human nature. The focus upon the incarnation was especially prominent in the High Church scholarship of men like B. F. Westcott and the Lux Mundi school of theology.[9] Charles Gore (1853-1932), editor of *Lux Mundi* and leading proponent of liberal Catholicism proffered a kenotic Christology which saw in the incarnation an absolute "self-emptying" of God. According to Gore, this was not "a failure of power, but a continuous act of self-sacrifice".[10] God's power was most manifest in Christ "where he 'beggared himself' of divine prerogatives, to put Himself in our place".[11] A deliberate self-emptying and self-limitation was coterminous with God's compassion for and identification with the finite world. As shall be seen, the theory of divine kenosis enabled many late-Victorian religious thinkers like Hopkins to reconcile the authenticity of Christ's humanity with his divine status.

The Victorian debate over the humanity of Christ was heavily influenced by cultural constructions of masculinity and femininity. Indeed, depictions of Christ frequently embraced both female and male characteristics, as for example in Hopkins' combination of the knightly warrior and the gentle, compassionate friend of women.[12] In Chapter 6, I indicated that although the thinking of mid and late-Victorian clerics and churchwomen was dominated by the need to propound a muscular, manly Christianity, "manliness" might also include all that was best in women. Thus, in 1867 the Rev. S. S. Pugh stressed "both the masculine strength and womanly tenderness of the Christ",[13] Thomas Hughes included "tenderness and thoughtfulness for others" and "the surrender of the will"[14] in *The Manliness of Christ,* and Hopkins called for a domesticated, sexually considerate "manhood fused with female grace".[15] The wealth of additional possible examples of a gender-encompassing Christ suggests a direct theological mirroring of the general instability of gender ideologies during the latter half of the century. In the light of this shifting terrain of gender attributes it is implausible to speak of a "feminized christology" either as the exclusive domain of women writers, or in the sense of moving

away from the "masculine" towards the "feminine", as it was precisely those categories which were under debate. Whilst aware of these complexities therefore, my use of the term "feminized Christology" will refer specifically to Hopkins' association of Christ with the qualities of suffering and self-sacrifice that were still regarded by the vast majority of Victorians as essentially "feminine".

The metaphor of suffering manifests itself in two major Christological models in Hopkins' writing - the mother or woman in childbirth, and the prostitute. The centrality of themes of "self-emptying" or "self-negation" proffered by incarnational and kenotic Christologies of the period had great relevance for her work. She borrowed heavily from this discourse in order to formulate a radical vision of a female suffering Christ. She also couched her own hardships and ordeals in the language of kenoticism, describing herself as "beggared in His service".[16] Indeed, Hopkins' theological reflections on suffering were essentially grounded in her own personal experiences of ill-health. In the following section the impact of her physical debilities upon her theology is assessed and a remarkably contemplative strand to her work revealed.

8.2 HOPKINS: A LATE-VICTORIAN CONTEMPLATIVE.

Physical debility was contrasted very effectively with spiritual authority in the late nineteenth-century. Henry Scott Holland's opening sentence of the introduction to Hopkins' memoirs depicts her life as an exemplary expression of the power of faith over bodily suffering. "This...is the record of an heroic soul whose physical force broke down under the strain of high and perilous service and whose ardent activities were beaten down into a prolonged...hidden and difficult martyrdom".[17] In the overwhelming desire to be of active service for the cause of social purity Hopkins was tormented throughout her philanthropic career by a morbid fear of uselessness and passivity that might suggest lack of purpose or meaning in her life. As discussed in Chapter 3, lengthy intervals of invalidity proved an intolerable burden at times, leading her to suicidal forms

of depression. Yet these periods of enforced immobility also provided her with the opportunity to develop a profoundly contemplative strand to her faith, as she reflected theologically upon the reasons as to why God had allowed this particular burden to be inflicted upon her. "Help me...to grasp the truth which Thou hast taught me" she wrote in 1879, "that my father in sending me this sickness, has been pleased in His Love and wisdom to change my vocation, and that my occupation is not gone, but simply altered".[18]

Hopkins' predilection towards a contemplative form of mysticism was apparent in several features of her High Anglicanism. These included her appeal to divine mystery, her powerful sense of the numinous, the ability to discern spiritual significance in everyday life and her deep compassion for humanity.[19] To describe Hopkins as a quasi-mystic requires a definition of the term that is congruous with the quest for self-surrender and complete union with or absorption in the divine without renunciation of the world around.[20] It is likely from her self-appointed role as spiritual counsellor to many of her friends and relatives that she viewed herself as something of a saintly, reclusive ascetic when physically incapacitated. Her particular ailment, neurasthenia, was portrayed in highly spiritualized terms that would have proved useful to a woman seeking to project such an image. As Showalter has observed, "the neurasthenic woman was...a paradigm of that wasting beauty that the late Victorians found so compelling....spiritualized, incorporeal and pure".[21] Dr. George Savage's description in 1884 of the emaciated, enfeebled neurasthenic bore strong resemblances to that of the religious ascetic:

> A woman, generally single...often being of highly nervous stock, becomes the interesting invalid....She may have lost her voice or the power of a limb...becomes bedridden [and] often refuses her food....The body wastes, and the face has a thin anxious look....There is a hungry look about them which is striking.[22]

Hopkins' themes of spiritual contemplation were articulated most clearly in her book

Christ the Consoler, a pastiche of devotional readings compiled from patristic, medieval, seventeenth-century and Victorian sources. The book was published in July 1879, at the end of a lengthy convalescence, immediately prior to her national purity tour. Her stated endeavour was to avoid the subjectivity of an autobiographical account and "embody, as far as possible, all the peculiar temptations and trials common to the sick".[23] As the Bishop of Carlisle noted in the introduction, such was the "clear ring" of the language that "the deep and truthful well of painful personal experience"[24] was palpably drawn upon. The dialogical structure of the book, suggestive of *The Imitation of Christ* was divided under such headings as "uselessness", "depression" and "uncertainty", epitomizing Hopkins' profound sense of spiritual and emotional vulnerability when inactive. She did not, it seems, surrender easily to the tranquil passivity normally associated with the mystic's path. She described her soul's "unspeakable sadness" and "immense loneliness" when left alone and there was unconcealed resentment at the disempowerment caused by her illness. "I have to see others take my place, and do the work which it used to be my very joy to do...shall I not suffer loss in their eyes, and others enter into the heritage of love which might have been mine?".[25] Nevertheless, there was the simultaneous realization that whilst active service brought its own rewards, suffering was the mark of true divinity and the perfect witness to an unbelieving world. "Nothing is more acceptable to God" she wrote, "nothing more wholesome to thee in this world than to suffer cheerfully for Christ": [26]

> ...to lie still on a bed of pain and helplessness, to be content to live a life of obscure suffering, to have all one's purposes broken off, to be separated from the society of many we love...and bleeding, to embrace the will of God - this is strength above nature.[27]

According to Hopkins, suffering was "the scourging in order to receive",[28] an opportunity for discipleship, formation of character and above all, a closer communion with God. In a series of rapturous dialogues she is invited by the voice of the consoling

Christ to "dwell willingly in my sacred wounds" and present herself to him as a "living sacrifice".[29] Ultimately it was a heightened sense of co-suffering with the divine power of the kenotic Christ "whose strength is made perfect in weakness" [30] that enabled her to reconcile herself with the prospect of chronic invalidism.

> ...if it is His will that for the rest of my life I am to bear in my body the marks of the LORD JESUS, I can but trust in that case that He will let my helplessness and oppression and powerlessness plead for my little ones....I believe that all suffering does purge and deepen in unknown ways and 'makes the soul large through utter loss to hold divinity'.[31]

8.3 MORAL SAVIOURS AND FEMALE MESSIAHS.

The portrayal of women as Christ-like beings appeared continuously throughout Hopkin's writings and was predicated upon metaphors of sacrifice and moral redemption. Victorian women were trained for a life of service to others. As Charlotte Yonge wrote in *Womankind* in 1876, a woman viewed "the utmost sacrifice of herself as simply natural".[32] Along with the majority of female reformers, Hopkins subverted the orthodox Christian emphasis upon feminine self-sacrifice into a powerful claim for the regenerative mission of women. As discussed in Chapter 4, she encouraged women into purity work by drawing upon conventional ideologies of female sacrifice and moral pre-eminence. This involved the reconstruction of a historical tradition of feminist biblical activism that sanctioned women's presence in the world as moral missionaries. "It was women who remained faithful when all forsook Him and fled. It was a woman who was the first to whom He spoke on the cross, to a woman that the first words were spoken of His risen life",[33] she reminded them. Just as "it was a woman whom Christ had made His first messenger of the risen life to the world",[34] so they were called upon to exercise their ordained roles as custodians of a higher spiritual order and implement a single moral standard of chastity for all.

> We are called to lead the forlorn hope of the world, the forlorn hope of womanhood in every country; our nation looks to us....our sons look to

> us...the little children of our land hold out their trembling hands to us for deliverance.[35]

In designating women as the saviours of humanity, Hopkins' discourse of rescue work was saturated with metaphors of female suffering and redemption. To those averse to the prospect of visiting brothels for example, she urged: "Dare we show Him...unwounded hands and feet...that have refused to be pierced in treading sharp and difficult paths of duty?".[36] As the bearers of Christ's mission to the outcast and fallen the pouring out of women's very "life-blood" was required as was their preparedness to make "costly sacrifices" and to be "sent into the world, to encounter evil and impurity, to love, to suffer, to endure, to live and to die for the good of others".[37]

As Barbara Taylor has pointed out in *Eve and the New Jerusalem,* protagonists of the doctrine of female moral superiority and the concept of women as redeemers of humanity frequently translated these beliefs into an apocalyptic vision of a female messianic figure. According to Taylor, "faith in a female messiah was a persistent heresy within millenarian sects in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries".[38] Probably the most celebrated example of a self-appointed female messiah in the early nineteenth-century was Joanna Southcott (1750-1814). Southcott received a series of revelations appointing her as the "Woman clothed with the Sun" sent to redeem humanity. By the time she died, she had accumulated a following of over 100,000 supporters. Her disciples exercised a significant impact upon groups such as the Owenite Socialists during the 1830s who perpetuated the female messianic theme through the ideal of an androgynous godhead.[39]

Female messianic doctrines appeared to have prompted theories of sexual equality *and* female supremacy. Unlike the egalitarian message of Ann Lee, mother of the breakaway Quaker group, the Shakers, who proclaimed herself the female redeemer in 1770, Southcott's prophecies "abounded in images of male villainy and female defiance". In an interesting foreshadowing of late-Victorian social purity rhetoric Southcott combined an

explicit defence of women's equal spiritual status and rightful place within the priesthood of believers with a castigation of the male sex as demonic abusers of innocent little girls.[41] During the late nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries heterodox philosophical systems such as that proffered by Frances Swiney or the chiliastic visions of late-Victorian female spiritualists continued to propagate women as exalted intermediaries of the divine.[42] Exactly one hundred years after Southcott's death, Emily Wilding Davison identified the suffragette cause as a re-enactment of the tragedy and glory of Calvary. As Martha Vicinus has commented, the language of martyrdom and sainthood came easily to the suffragettes, yet "Davison's identification with Christ and his sacrifice was the most extreme statement of the WSPU's spiritual message".[43]

This brief overview of some of the best-known examples of female messianism has shown that this was a concept which ran throughout the theological and devotional literature of the nineteenth-century. Indeed, it is a topic which merits far greater and more detailed exploration. In terms of a historical contextualization for Hopkins' own envisioning of the female Christ it is important not to regard this phenomenon as solely a product of spiritual heterodoxy. Female messianism also occurred within mainstream Christian tradition in the work of writers like Josephine Butler, Christina Rossetti and Florence Nightingale. Anthony Harrison has illustrated the way in which Rossetti's High Anglican devotional prose compared the spiritual superiority of women with the figure of Christ on many occasions, most notably in her religious work *Seek and Find: A Double Series of Short Studies of the Benedicte* (1879).[44] Notwithstanding the denominational affinity between Hopkins and Rossetti, there were closer resemblances between her concept of the female Christ and that of Nightingale's, and the following discussion will highlight some of their shared themes.

First, both women drew upon their experiences of personal suffering in order to postulate the need for a female *imitatio Christi.* Nightingale's invalidism was probably more marked a feature of her life than that of Hopkins, spending the majority of the years

between 1856 on returning from her expedition to the Crimea and her death in 1910 directing various sanitary reforms from her bed in London.[45] Like Hopkins, she applauded Christ's role in the legitimation and advancement of female moral endeavour - "Jesus Christ raised women above the condition of mere slaves, mere ministers to the passions of man, raised them by this sympathy, to be ministers of God. He gave them moral activity".[46] In her essay *Cassandra,* a scathing piece of feminist polemic against social conventions which had effectively silenced female voices, she issued a rousing call to women to "Awake" from their comfortable lifestyles.[47]

Using their invalidity as a vehicle through which to take on the mantle of a new female redeemer, Hopkins and Nightingale viewed themselves and were viewed by others as saviours of humanity. Hopkins' contemplative spirituality was salutary here. Such was her sense of complete absorption in Christ that at one point she declared, "I am manifestly offered up for the good of the world, and am palpably leading a forlorn hope on which the life of thousands may depend".[48] Through the figure of Cassandra, Nightingale similarly saw herself as destined to bring to an end the grieving female spirit - "at last there shall arise a woman, who will arouse, in her own soul, all the sufferings of her race, and that woman will be the Saviour of her race".[49] Nightingale's public adulation during her lifetime rendered her the subject of many hagiographical poems and essays. Several of these made allusions to her Christ-like status. One poet argued that she had gone to the Crimea in order to "imitate Jehovah's Son".[50] Hopkins was also described as "a partaker of Christ's suffering"[51] and, as the comment of Scott Holland illustrates, christological motifs of compassion, martyrdom and suffering prevailed throughout representations of her life and work.

8.4 SOCIAL AND MORAL MOTHERHOOD.

Before examining Hopkins' radical theological exposition of the maternal Christ, it is important to first appreciate the contemporary ascendancy of the motherhood motif and

explain how a celibate spinster would have felt able to work so naturally and confidently with such imagery. Motherhood reached cultic proportions in the nineteenth-century as the most exalted and omnipotent symbol of femaleness. In 1839, Sarah Lewis's popular domestic handbook *Woman's Mission* described maternal love as "the only truly unselfish feeling that exists on this earth".[52] As Eric Trudgill has argued, generations of Victorians sought "a symbol of redemptive love and purity in antithesis to the immorality, materialism and godlessness around them"[53] and found it in their first experience of human comfort - the mother. The cult manifested itself in both social and ecclesiastical forms. Brian Heeney has shown how the duties of dedicated maternity were "much stressed by Victorian church writers, and given a meaning far beyond natural motherhood".[54] For the Anglo-Catholic H. P. Liddon for example, "the active motherly instincts of women"[55] became a prototype for good pastoral practice.

During the period that Hopkins was writing, motherhood took on a new symbolic significance fostered by the eugenic emphasis on the value of a fit and healthy nation. As Anna Davin has argued in her key article on "Imperialism and Motherhood", a period of falling birth-rates and fears over levels of infant mortality exacerbated the belief that "population was power".[56] With children increasingly viewed as a "national asset",[57] good motherhood became endowed with a new political and moral gravity and was regarded as an essential factor in ideologies of racial health. Hopkins' organization of voluntary societies such as mothers' meetings and district visiting schemes, her dissemination of moral welfare and sex education literature to working-class mothers, and her vision of the ideal wife as a well-trained, professional domestic labourer typified the emergent late-Victorian science of "mothercraft", so vital to imperialist theories of racial purity.[58]

Single women like Hopkins rationalized the rhetoric of maternity and ennobled their own celibate status by introducing a new icon alongside the married mother, that of "a virgin mother engaged in self-sacrificing work with the poor and needy".[59] Female

philanthropists such as Mary Carpenter, Frances Power Cobbe or Louisa Twining worked with an enlarged, redefined vision of social or spiritual motherhood that embraced the spinster reformer as well.[60] In 1858, Mary Carpenter, an expert on juvenile delinquency, recruited single women by appealing to them as " 'mothers in heart, though not by God's gift on earth' who would 'be able to bestow their maternal love [on] those most wretched moral orphans'".[61] As shown in Chapter 7, Hopkins drew upon just such a concept in order to reject marriage as women's exclusive destiny. Her comment that some women were "called to be mothers of the race, and to do the social work...so necessary to our complex civilization"[62] was an expression of universal moral motherhood that successfully validated her own sexual status. It also provided her with a powerful discursive weapon against "bad biological parenting".[63] According to Hopkins, many young girls were driven to prostitution from a lack of "mother-love" and the callousness of "cold-hearted women who seemed incapable of loving their own children".[64] The establishment of settlement houses, rescue homes or industrial schools offered women reformers a unique opportunity to create alternative families and express themselves as moral, if not biological mothers. The function of rescue homes as an overt familial substitute for unruly girls or those at risk has already been referred to, yet in practice this was evidently just as significant for Hopkins and her staff members as they cast themselves in the role of the avenging "angel-mother".[65]

8.5 CHRIST, MOTHERHOOD AND PROSTITUTION.

Hopkins' sacralization of motherhood as the primary source of women's spiritual and social empowerment was a natural corollary of her incarnational theology and sanctification of the reproductive sexual act. The previous chapter has shown that marital fertility and the procreative impulse were exalted by her as humanity's closest approximation of the divine. Thus maternity was viewed as "the divine ideal of womanhood" and the womb consecrated as "the innermost shrine of a woman's temple".[66] It was not surprising therefore, that Hopkins' primary image of Christ should

have also reflected this focus on the sublimity of the raw power of elemental creativity. As mentioned, the notion of a female messiah was not uncommon in the nineteenth-century, forming a prominent feature of Hopkins' self-image. A maternal Christ was therefore a congruent theological response to the dominant cult of motherhood and her role as a social mother. Whether biologically or socially, women's birthing of a new and higher moral order was an act of such profound spiritual and political significance that it paralleled directly the passion and redemptive work of Christ. As Hopkins observed in her pamphlet *Man and Woman; or, the Christian Ideal* in a striking combination of theological and physiological terminology, "no human life can pass into this world without being baptized in a woman's tears and a woman's pain. Our mothers had to shed their blood for us that we might live".[67]

Hopkins' purity narratives were replete with maternal imagery for Christ. In *Christ the Consoler* she retrieved biblical and devotional resources from the Christian tradition that drew on feminine imagery. Quoting Bishop Joseph Hall (1574-1656) she depicted Jesus as the tender mother "who does not berate...slow to learn, stumbling children, but guides them by the hand to encourage them".[68] On another occasion, drawing from the language of Isaiah, she employed a dramatic reversal of gender roles as the voice of Christ came to her, chiding her doubts and asking, "Can a woman forget her sucking child that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?".[69] Hopkins' convergence of maternal and Christological imagery had serious implications for the dominant patriarchalism of trinitarian language. The metaphor of sonship was effectively undercut by that of motherhood for example, when she extended her spiritualization of human reproduction and parenting into a theological paradigm of heavenly marriage between God the father and Christ the mother:

> ...[human] fatherhood becomes the very representative of the Father in heaven [and] the mother becomes the very type and image of the Love that has loved us with more than a mother's love, borne with us with more than a mother's patience, suffered for us, in the Cross and Passion, more than a mother's pangs.[70]

In configuring Christ as mother, Hopkins' divinized the one physiological function that was exclusive to women. In that sense her Christology was a radical feminist restatement of traditional theological doctrine, liberating the incarnation from being a mere instrument of patriarchal theology and universalizing its significance for women and men alike. The use of mother and child symbolism conveyed intimacy and involvement whilst maintaining a hierarchical relationship between Christ and humanity. Most significantly the reification of motherhood endowed human mothering with enormous sacral power. There was a constant ebb and flow in Hopkins' work between the symbol of the maternal Christ and the divinized status of human mothers. It is the "divine motherhood which is at the heart of every woman worthy of the name, married or unmarried", she declared in *The Power of Womanhood,* "that makes her for ever the Christ factor in the world, the supreme expression of redeeming Love....if to the woman has been given the shame and pain of the cross, to the woman has also been given its glory, its redemptive power".[71]

It was the destruction and "trampling out of the divine functions of pure motherhood"[72] that contributed so markedly to Hopkins' abhorrence of the male sexual abuse of young girls. Nevertheless, her glorification of the maternal impulse meant that even the spectre of an illegitimate birth could bring forgiveness to the prostitute.

> Though in some of its aspects it may be still more awful that a man should be found to bring his child into the world through such a door of hell...still at least the infant hands bring to the unhappy mother the divine gift of tears, the divine possibilities of repentance; the feeble, outstretched arms, infant arms, form the sacred sign of the cross athwart which the hosts of hell dare not cross the threshold to take possession of the mother's soul; at least, while she has her babe at her breast, the horrid laughter, sadder than the saddest wail, is stilled on her lip, the hard look in the eyes...is not seen [and] the mystery of degradation...is not found.[73]

As the converse female symbol to the transcendent mother image, the fallen woman evoked equally strong Christological connotations in Hopkins' theologizing. Symbol of

human alienation from God, of depravity and struggle with sin, the prostitute was pre-eminent in Hopkins' schema of female suffering. As argued in Chapter 5, she personified both divine damnation and salvation. In 1869 the historian W.E.H. Lecky in *The History of European Morals* wrote of the prostitute:

> On that one degraded and ignoble form are concentrated the passions that might have filled the world with shame. She remains, while creeds and civilisations rise and fall, the eternal priestess of humanity, blasted for the sins of the people.[74]

As Lecky's observation made clear, the pedestalization of the prostitute as social martyr was a dominant cultural motif. Hopkins simply developed this popular theme to depict Christ himself as a prostitute-figure through a co-identification of innocent suffering and undeserved abuse. Thus the horrors of female sexual oppression were referred to as the "marred and thorn-crowned face of Love"[75] and child prostitutes were described as "infant Christs of the Cross without the Crown".[76] Her poem "The World's Outcasts" (n.d.) which described Christ's walk to Calvary elucidated this distinctive association further.[77] When he fell under the burden of the cross it was the prostitute and the slave who were driven forward by the crowd as "poor enough and abject" to take Christ's place and bear the "shameful weight" for the remainder of the journey. Throughout human history Hopkins reflected, the prostitute has continued to walk with Christ to her crucifixion, marking out with the slave a radical reinterpretation of the holy trinity.

> Ever down the world's great highways
> To the faithful tear-washed eye,
> Moves that sad and strange procession;
> Ever on their way to die,
> Signing evil with their life-blood,
> Marking for the axe, the tree,
> With the Holy, the degraded
> One in Three. [78]

A striking feature of Hopkins' theologizing in the light of her sacralization of the female was her complete omission of women role-models. Female figures of tragic passion such

as Joan of Arc or Mary Magdalene were a source of great spiritual inspiration for feminists during this period.[79] As Patricia Kruppa has argued, the Victorian fascination with Mary Magdalene took many forms including literature and the visual arts as well as religious prescription.[80] Anglo-Catholic feminists such as Anna Jameson and Julia Margaret Cameron were deeply inspired by her significance as a romantic penitent and powerful protagonist of the risen Christ.[81] Yet Hopkins' reconstruction of the resurrection story comprised more of a general incentive to female discipleship than the recovery of any particular individual woman. Indeed, among her numerous narratives on prostitution including those which drew analogies with the nature of Christ, only one pamphlet, *Saved at Last !,* gave the prostitute subject a name, which incidentally was Mary.

A similar feature occurs in Hopkins' presentation of the maternal Christ. For many single women reformers or "social mothers", it was the Virgin Mary who provided the most salient model of a spiritual motherliness which did not necessitate biological maternity.[82] Mary Carpenter began an article on "Women's work in the reformatory movement" with a glowing eulogy to "the glory of the virgin mother".[83] Despite her obvious relevance as a religious paradigm for the universalized vision of maternity to which Hopkins firmly adhered, the figure of the Virgin Mary was nonetheless conspicuous by her absence. Instead, textual references to the "Divine Mother" were used solely in conjunction with the incarnation. It is possible that this particular noninclusion by Hopkins was the result of a lingering anti-Catholic sentiment still prevalent amongst many Anglican factions at the end of the century. As John Singleton has shown, the Virgin Mary remained a controversial figure around whom competing Protestant and Catholic parties mustered their forces in Victorian Britain.[84] Yet this argument does not hold true for Hopkins' High Church connection. The Anglo-Catholic renewal of Marian piety after the 1850s meant that within her own denominational tradition a burgeoning devotional Mariology was in existence, mitigating previous prejudices.[85] Thus Hopkins might easily have appropriated Mary into her theological discourse of motherhood, but chose not to do so.

The thoroughgoing Christocentrism of Hopkins' faith was an aspect which appeared to negate the need for a historical resource-tradition of female saints and pious women in her work. In addition, I would suggest that the feminization of a male Christ with its emphasis upon the qualities of self-sacrifice, compassion and suffering consolidated on a divine level what Hopkins sought to achieve in terms of her redefining of human masculinity - a greater sensitivity and respect for the feminine. Ultimately the feminization of a male Christ implied an ideological fluidity of gender attributes more consonant with her vision of a new egalitarian moral order, as well as proving more subversive in theological terms by mitigating the dominant masculinity of the godhead.

8.6 THE REDEMPTIVE POWER OF FEMALE SUFFERING.

In her essay *Man and Woman; or, the Christian Ideal,* Hopkins sought to clarify to her readership why God in his infinite wisdom had created the female as physically weaker while simultaneously laying upon her "the agony of child-bearing [and] the burthen [sic] and weariness of nursing the child".[86] Her explanation in this text and elsewhere formed the basis of a theology of female suffering which was of crucial significance to her comprehension of the relations between the two sexes and her Christology. According to Hopkins, women's suffering was multiform, as prostitutes and victims of male sexual exploitation, as unfulfilled wives or daughters, and as childbearing mothers. Combining a trenchant critique of the subjugated condition of women throughout history with a justification of female degradation as a necessary precursor to the salvation of humanity, women she declared were the primary agents in the unfolding of the divine plan, precisely *because* of their bodily frailty. Echoing Gore's notion of divine strength through weakness and continuous self-sacrifice, she argued that woman was created "a being encompassed with infirmity [and] full of pain and weakness" so that "the man may be touched and won into rising from the mere animal life....into the divine life of self-giving and serving. The woman's pain redeems the man".[87] Although an aberration of the original divine intention, the kenosis of women had thus proved necessary for the

transformation of society and the redemption of humanity:

> God saw that not cruel strength, but loving weakness would do it; and so He placed the woman entirely at the mercy of the man...He has not thought centuries of oppression and wrong too precious a price to pay. For long ages of the world's history the weaker woman has been given over to her oppressors, has had to be the slave of the stronger man; has had to bear field-labour and child-labour; has had to bear the heavy burthen both morally and physically with her weak frame. But slowly and surely the moral strength and influence of the woman has been making itself perfect in weakness. The woman, enthroned in her weakness, with her child in her arms, has proved itself the great redemptive factor in the world. [88]

As this quotation and her subsequent comment that "women are the great pain-bearers and shame-bearers of the world"[89] suggests, Hopkins' sacralization of motherhood was no sentimental invocation of maternity, but a powerful symbol of female anguish. The passion of Christ as he hung on the cross was that of the divine mother - "His head he bows down to kiss us, His heart he opens to love us, His arms he stretches out to embrace us".[90] It is important here to distinguish Hopkins' affirmation of female suffering from traditional theological assertions of the labour pains of women as a necessary expiation for original sin. The persistence of this particular doctrinal orthodoxy had been highlighted in the mid-century debates over the administration of chloroform to women in childbirth which, as Mary Poovey has pointed out, provoked violent objections on the part of churchmen.[91] Opponents of anodyne described chloroform as "a decoy of satan, apparently offering itself to bless women",[92] but actually undermining human dependency on God in times of greatest need. Unlike her male colleagues, suffering was not a negative exercise in female self-purification for Hopkins, but an active opportunity for women's *imitatio Christi* and the embracing of a glorious martyrdom that would herald a new order.

The concept of female martyrdom or womanhood as a universal suffering body was not

unique to Hopkins' purity discourse. As noted earlier, the iconography of the suffragette campaigns was dominated by the symbolism of sainthood and sacrifice, presided over by that archetypal female martyr, Joan of Arc. The suffrage movement is a good example of radical feminism that embraced the concept of suffering as a positive, liberating notion for women. Martha Vicinus has described the way in which the pain incurred by hunger striking and forced feeding was perceived as the ultimate boldily sacrifice by many suffragettes.[93] As Mrs Cobden-Sanderson declared on her way into prison, "We have talked so much for the Cause, now let us suffer for it".[94] In her essay *Cassandra,* Florence Nightingale also gave an emancipatory reading of female suffering as a summons to social and political action:

> Give us back our suffering, we cry to heaven in our hearts - suffering rather than indifferentism; for out of nothing comes nothing. But out of suffering may come the cure. Better have pain than paralysis! A hundred may struggle and drown in the breakers....But rather, ten times rather, die in the surf, heralding the way to that new world, than stand idly by on the shore! [95]

Many moral reformers assumed an apocalyptic tenor in their emphasis upon human history as the arena of divine activity and judgment. Like her contemporaries, Hopkins regarded the existing social order as the setting for the realization of the kingdom of God. Her discourse on female suffering and martyrdom acquired a correspondingly eschatological cast. Josephine Butler believed that the "horrors of prostitution were signs of the reign of sensuality that preceded the 'new day'".[96] Hopkins correlated the atrocities of female sexual abuse with the release of the forces of victory over evil and the onset of a new utopian order. She believed she was living in the last epoch of history, with the world balanced on the edge of a moral precipice and conflict taking place on natural and supernatural levels:

> All around...women are rising up and passing silently, humbly, and prayerfully, into the dread battle-field, where the last and worst battle is to be fought out against the world's strongest forces of evil...till selfish

Passion is swallowed up of Love, till death is swallowed up of Life.[97]

The issue of sexual morality was thus a source of potential spiritual renewal and the discovery of new moral powers and principles for the churches, or spiritual death. "If the church misses her divine opportunity and refuses to lay hold of it, then the coming democracy will take it up", she warned, "And if the democracy are [sic] too base to take it up...then the women of the future will grapple with it".[98] Moral evil and the various manifestations of women's suffering formed "part of a vast redemptive whole".[99] The power of female pain was the equivalent "of great kinetic energies" she argued in *The Power of Womanhood,* "of great spiritual and moral forces, capable of raising the whole of fallen humanity to the heights of the Divine".[100]

8.7 SYMBOLS OF CONTINUITY IN A THEOLOGY OF FEMALE SUFFERING.

In Chapter 1, I referred to the scholarship of Caroline Walker Bynum whose books *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (1987) and *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (1991) have demonstrated with flair the way in which female medieval mystics subverted seemingly ambiguous metaphors for women, such as suffering and self-sacrifice, into empowering theological concepts. This chapter has argued that a comparable process of appropriation and manipulation of the religious symbolism of suffering can be found in the incarnational theology of late-Victorian feminists. Perhaps, in the light of the popular neo-medievalism of the period, it is not surprising that such parallels in method occurred. Not unlike medieval female piety, Hopkins' spirituality was profoundly bodily in character. As I have shown, her positive interpretation of sexual purity exemplified the notion of the human body as a primary locus of sacrality. Walker Bynum has argued that it was in part the cultural dominance of ecclesiastical, intellectual and scientific traditions which continued to associate women

with the lower, carnal elements of human existence that predisposed medieval women's religious expression towards a more body-related emphasis.[101] The somatizing of female religiosity was altogether more complex and subtle in the nineteenth-century, due to the ideological correlation of women and spiritual ascendancy. Victorian metaphors of female carnality were invariably located upon the "sexually depraved working-class prostitute".[102] As discussed in Chapter 4, however, Hopkins' anti-dualism was such that whilst adhering resolutely to the notion of women's moral pre-eminence, her affirmative reading of the body and human sexuality attested to an interpretation of personhood as a fully psychosomatic unity. Her definition of purity elevated and consecrated the body as a vital component of human identity and as essential to the development of a spiritual being. Divinizing the physical experience of suffering through the female Christ, as represented by the prostitute and the childbearing mother, was Hopkins' paramount expression of a theology of embodiment.

Walker Bynum has argued that female mystics used their experiences of suffering not as a flight *from* the body but a journey into the body and a conjoining with the humanity of Christ. Thus female invalidism or illness became an extension of the agonising drama of the cross. "If anything women drew from the traditional notion of the female as physical a special emphasis on their own redemption" observed Walker Bynum, in their perception of "a Christ who was supremely physical because supremely human".[103] This theory is clearly germane to Hopkins' theology. Her sense of the female self and of Christ as suffering body likewise stressed continuity between female biological and social experiences on the one hand and divine, mystical encounter on the other. Using the ideological basis of sexual differentiation between women and men she adapted the notion of women's proximity with the body to facilitate a female *imitatio Christi* through metaphors of physical sexuality such as prostitution and childbirth. Refuting the identification of women and corporeality as innately debilitating or degrading, she instead elaborated such imagery in her theology so as to encounter the humanity of Christ in a powerful continuity of female and messianic experience.

I suggested in Chapter 1 that the feminization of theological dogma might be understood as an act of female initiative and agency rather than an ecclesiastical imposition from "above". As this chapter has illustrated, Hopkins' feminized Christology was heir to a lengthy nineteenth-century heritage of female messianism forged from within heterodox and orthodox religious communities. Late-Victorian women were therefore invariably highly creative exponents of existing doctrinal traditions, adapting their surrounding spiritual milieux to produce religious symbols and metaphors of great resonance and meaning to the female gender. Hopkins' positive reading of the body and her incarnational theology provided her with a unique opportunity to image herself and women as divine and affirm the complete sacrality of the female. The full theological significance of women's religious symbols during the nineteenth-century, however, awaits further investigation.

CONCLUSION

Ellice Hopkins died in Brighton on 21st August, 1904 from cerebral apoplexy. Her obituary appeared in both *The Times* and *The Guardian,* and in the following November at the NUWW York Conference a resolution, passed by Mrs Percy Bunting and seconded by Louise Creighton, recorded:

> ..admiration of the life and character of Miss Ellice Hopkins...her devoted and self-denying work, which contributed to the quickening of the conscience of the country with regard to the care and legal protection of girls, as well as rousing attention to the necessity of an equal moral standard for both sexes. [1]

Having retired from public activity for the last fifteen years of her life, Hopkins' name was largely unknown to the succeeding generation of moral reform workers. Her memory has been lost to posterity, yet as Bristow has noted, "she is one of the most interesting of forgotten Victorians".[2] In this thesis I have set out to explore the life of Ellice Hopkins as an illustrative example of the way in which consideration of gender issues may enhance our understanding of late-Victorian church history and culture and equally, how sustained attention to religion as a category of historical analysis can significantly revise our existing picture of late nineteenth-century feminist campaigns around sexual morality. Hopkins was a High Churchwoman of great intellect whose sober, disciplined and contemplative faith demands a serious re-reading of common conflations of social purity with bigoted, prurient evangelicalism. Theologically and scientifically well-versed, her articulate, persuasive oratory on the need for a single standard of sexual chastity successfully challenged the apathetic sensibilities of the Anglican hierarchy and heralded a new phase in ecclesiastical moral concern. Inspired by an incarnational theology, she proffered a positive definition of purity which consecrated sexuality as an essential aspect of human wholeness. This found its culmination in a remarkably pro-sensual interpretation of marital relations and a nascent discourse of

active female sexual desire.

Hopkins propounded a "reverse discourse" of gender that both adhered to and subverted dominant cultural identities of femininity and masculinity. Thus the moral superiority of women became a mandate for the unprecedented politicization of thousands of respectable churchwomen, and the dominant tenor of male protectionism and chivalry was translated by her into a respectful, domesticated and self-negating manhood. In conjunction with the original emphasis of this thesis on the need for a fully contextualized construction of religion and gender history, it is important not to overlook the less sanguine aspects of Hopkins' moral discourse - the blatant resocialization of working-class girls into a life of domestic service; the tendency of social purity's focus upon protective surveillance to slip over into moral coercion and legal repression; Hopkins' xenophobic fears concerning racial supremacy, and her contribution to the prevalent ethos of homophobia and masturbation-phobia throughout the 1880s and 1890s. Even these more negative, repressive features cannot be dismissed out of hand, however. I have suggested that Hopkins' moral welfare literature which exemplified some of the more overt class-limitations of her discourse was grounded in a genuine desire to equip working mothers to better themselves and the lives of their children through basic sanitary and sex education. Only a definition of female sexuality that incorporated sexual awareness and self-knowledge she believed, would provide women with the requisite protection from sexual danger and the option to refuse non-consensual sex.

As a historical case-study, this thesis rejects depictions of Victorian religious discourses on sex as monolithic and instead asserts their inherently collaborative nature with feminist and scientific modes of sexual discourse. Thus in Chapter 6 I demonstrated purity feminism's appropriation of Darwinist theories in its ideological construction of moral masculinity. Similarly in Chapter 7, parallels were drawn between the anti-sensualism of the most extreme forms of radical feminism such as that propounded by Wolstenholme Elmy or Frances Swiney and that of conservative Anglican churchmen, based on a joint

denigration of human corporeality. From a post-sexual revolutionary perspective, the purity emphasis on sexual danger has been regarded by many women historians as the basis of a markedly conservative sexual politics. In the early 1980s, Ellen DuBois and Linda Gordon proffered a correlation between late nineteenth-century social purity and the rise of the American New Right or "moral majority" with its veneration of the heterosexual nuclear family, and attacks on homosexuality and abortion.[3] Such a comparison tends to portray all purity politics as depersonalized anti-vice strategies and overlooks the fundamental gender-orientation and valuation of human sexuality posited by Hopkins' purity rhetoric. Other scholars have suggested the work of radical feminist theorists like Andrea Dworkin, Mary Daly, Adrienne Rich and Sheila Jeffreys as the natural inheritors of the purity feminist legacy, with their abiding declaration of penetrative sex as the primary symbol of female oppression and propounding of a separatist female culture as the solution.[4] Current feminist approaches to the issues of domestic violence, rape, pornography and the growth of the sex industry continue to be fraught with difficulty. Female sexual representation, censorship and how to protect women and children from abuse without recourse to coercive legal measures remain divisive and highly contentious issues. As Judith Walkowitz and Judith Newman have observed:

> ...contemporary feminists have still not determined how to articulate a feminist sexual politics that simultaneously addresses the possibilities of female sexual pleasure and the realities of sexual danger, and the ideological splits which generated tension among early feminists are still being played out today.[5]

No longer limited by a dominant heterosexual, reproductive paradigm, the increasing plurality of fulfilling sexual models has rendered human sexuality a more central and complex analytical category than ever before in feminist and religious circles.[6] Most importantly in terms of the creativity and sensitivity required in these discussions, we now have in excess of a century-old historical tradition of sexual political theory and

praxis from which to draw, in which a commentator such as Hopkins should take her rightful place.

In Chapter 1, I suggested that the role of the historian was to understand the past both on its own terms and through the prism of the present. A primary methodological interest of this thesis, therefore, has been an exploration of the dialectic of historical responsibility and usability. I began my research with a declared predilection for the former and have prioritized historical specificity throughout this study of Hopkins' purity feminism, eschewing an over-simplistic identification with current Christian feminist viewpoints in the firm belief that our spiritual foremothers must first emerge as actors in their own right, with their own concerns and perspectives. In spite of my principal regard for historical context, I have been struck by the extent to which Hopkins' discourse adumbrated so many themes of central importance to contemporary religion and gender scholarship. These include, amongst others, her recognition of sexuality and gender as culturally constructed categories and a corresponding rejection of biologically deterministic notions of masculinity; her veneration of nature; the use of specifically *women's* experience (notably that of her own and other female suffering) as the touchstone of her theologizing; a focus on divine immanence, and the assertion of female solidarity or sisterhood as the pre-eminent tool with which to defeat patriarchal oppression.[7] The concepts of "women's experience" and "sisterhood" are no longer considered uniform or unmediated categories and remain open to constant scrutiny and revision. However, each of the above characteristics present in Hopkins' moral philosophy have played a major role in the theoretical development of feminist theological and ethical theories.[8]

As I have argued elsewhere, contemporary feminist approaches to the study of religion tend to be characterized by a critical and a transformative dimension.[9] Hopkins' work encompassed both of these aspects. She critiqued the Anglican hierarchy for example, for its toleration of an unjust moral standard predicated upon dualistic Christian patriarchal

philosophy. Foreshadowing the profound anti-dualism of contemporary religious feminism, she identified the Church's vilification of active female sexuality, in this case prostitution, as the result of a series of erroneous theological polarities which associated women with the lower and fleshly domain.[10] Thus, in her construction of femininity she sought to overturn dominant, polarized constructions of Victorian womanhood by affirming the full redeemability and humanity of the prostitute, and urging her middle-class female colleagues to treat these women as their sisters. Her attention to embodiment resonates strongly with present-day feminist ethical interests.[11] Although in Chapter 4 I described her positive reading of sexual purity and elevation of human physicality as a late-Victorian "theology of embodiment", it could perhaps be more appropriately described as a "moral ethics of embodiment". Hopkins rejected outright ecclesiastical definitions of sexual morality which promoted a disembodied understanding of moral rationality and instead insisted upon the human body as a key element in individual moral autonomy.

A related aspect of her moral discourse strongly prescient of current directions in feminist ethics was her assertion of the differentiated and superior morality of women. Alongside a "rights-based" ethic with its appeal to impartial, gender-transcendent notions of justice, the work of psychologists such as Nancy Chodorow and Carol Gilligan has continued to argue for a gender-related distinction in morality.[12] Gilligan's revaluation of the traditional roles and experiences of women in her feminist ethics of care and relationality has been construed as a contemporary re-casting of the Victorian reification of sexual difference. As Marilyn Massey has observed, these claims "appear to resurrect the nineteenth century idealizations of womankind"[13] and may well be subject to the same conservative socio-political appropriations. Yet there is a significant distinction between Hopkins' use of female moral supremacy as a straightforward discursive tool with which to gain unprecedented political visibility for women within the existing socio-sexual structure, and certain late twentieth-century feminist philosophies of sexual difference which, by no means the sole political option for feminist theorists any more, have been

used in the construction of a separatist cultural alternative to patriarchy.[14] Yet the concept of a uniquely "feminine" morality and spirituality continues to proliferate throughout the work of radical feminists such as Mary Daly and French feminists such as Luce Irigaray or Julia Kristeva, indicating the tenacity of this theoretical and visionary concept.

In Chapter 8 I illustrated the feminist potential of late-Victorian incarnational theology by outlining the way in which Hopkins made use of prevailing kenotic Christologies in order to posit a radical configuration of the female, suffering Christ. Her depiction of Christ as Divine Mother and prostitute constituted the most transformative theological dimension of her discourse, disrupting the all-male hierarchy of the trinitarian God and providing a series of divine images that could relate to the spiritual concerns of women. The Christian feminist attempt to recover female symbolism for God remains of primary importance to the "vitality and comprehensiveness of theological thinking".[15] Like Hopkins, contemporary feminists such as Rosemary Radford Ruether, Sallie McFague and Phyllis Trible have introduced female metaphors for God, drawing upon biblical imagery in which God is depicted with maternal or womb-like qualities and reconstructing feminist christologies which circumvent the problem of Christ's male gender so as to affirm the spiritual dignity and value of women's experiences.[16] In this most central and problematic of feminist theological tasks, the notion of the Divine Mother has proved an enduring and productive re-naming of the sacred. Hopkins' use of maternal language for God actively decentred the Church's traditional alliance with the spiritual domain over and against that of the material. Through the pain-ridden experiences of female sexual abuse and childbirth, Christ as both mother and prostitute was represented as supremely human and therefore supremely physical. For Hopkins then, the power and truth of the incarnation lay in Christ's *humanity,* not his maleness. Ursula King has argued that:

> From a contemporary point of view it seems important to speak and think about a female Christ or the female part of Christ which must be an integral

> part of the incarnation. But one might also speak about a female Christ in the sense that Christ's suffering stands for all the suffering, the oppression, all the silent surrender and sacrifice that women...have undergone through the ages.[17]

The concept of suffering was intrinsic to Hopkins' portrayal of the female Christ. Certain feminist theologians are uneasy with the idea of suffering or self-sacrifice as a paradigm for the female condition in terms of its reinforcement of the victimized and exploited status of women.[18] Yet it is undeniable that the symbolism of female pain, whether interpreted physically or psychologically, has remained a powerful impulse for the creation of alternative, liberating woman-identified religious imagery, as for example in the contemporary depiction of the female "Christa", or the presentation of Christ as the co-suffering black woman in African-American theology.[19]

In Part One of this thesis, I examined the methodological possibilities for the development of religion and gender history, exploring a range of prospective avenues for further research. I suggested that the interdisciplinary nature of the field contained considerable transformative scope for revised perspectives upon Victorian church history and women's history, as well as producing relevant insights for contemporary religion and gender studies. Throughout this study I have indicated a wide spectrum of research agendas including the role of religion in the production of gender knowledge and why specific religious constructions of masculinity and femininity emerged in certain socio-historical settings; a re-evaluation of the periodization of denominational history that would incorporate women's activism; the church's response to issues of sexuality, marriage and the family; domestic forms of spirituality; detailed analyses of the shifting forms of ecclesiastical patriarchy, and clerical masculinities.

As my historiography of British women's religious history has shown, despite the burgeoning interest in the field, scholars have barely begun to scratch the surface in religion and gender history. Basic denominational studies of women and their contributions to

various communities of faith have yet to be undertaken. The feminization of religion in all its forms - numerical, theological and organisational - requires greater debate and disputation, as does the theory of religion as a spawning-ground for the various dynamics of female association. Churchwomen's negotiation and subversion of religious patriarchy remains an underlying current for further attention, not solely in terms of increased access to female ministerial roles, but in every facet of denominational administration. My thesis has demonstrated that in order to establish religion as a significant category of historical analysis, it is important not to consider religion merely as a discrete social entity, but also to relate it to its wider cultural context. Thus, in the case of Hopkins and the social purity campaign for example, a consideration of the role of churchwomen in broader social and political concerns has been carried out.

The interaction of religion and feminism provides an area rich in scope for this type of project. Extending the scholarship of Olive Banks and Philippa Levine, more sustained analyses of both the individual and denominational contributions of religious women to feminist campaigns are needed, particularly those groups least well represented such as Catholics, Baptists and Congregationalists.[20] What underlying theological justifications prompted such involvement and can these be differentiated in terms of denominational doctrines? What type of feminist issues were taken up by religious women and why? Conversely, the spiritual background and participation of leading mainstream feminists might be explored in order to assess the vitality and influence of religion as a determining factor in the women's movement itself. Initial spiritual profiles of Josephine Butler, Frances Power Cobbe and Millicent Fawcett have already been attempted, but we are far from having achieved a fully articulated typology of nineteenth-century religious feminism.[21]

To conclude, in its retrieval of a "usable past", religion and gender history can afford a sagacity and depth of meaning to contemporary scholarship in the field. Without the validating resource of an unfamiliar, yet rich and often inspirational historical tradition,

present-day gender strategies may risk a perspectival evanescence and lack of acuity, and the collective identity of religion and gender scholars cannot be constructed on solid foundations. As Judy Chicago has declared, "our heritage is our power; we can know ourselves and our capacities by seeing that other women [and men] have been strong".[22] Notwithstanding the divergence of past and present contexts, it is possible to claim allegiance with those like Hopkins who have struggled before us to negotiate liberating self-identities through the manifold and complex affiliations of religion and gender. In 1886, as if looking down the century to come, Ellice Hopkins exhorted her female audience to "Behold your own power".[23] One hundred years later, her challenge to women seems no less imperative.

APPENDIX I

CHRONOLOGY OF THE MAIN EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF ELLICE HOPKINS (excluding her published works)

1836, Oct. 30th:	Birth of Ellice Hopkins in Cambridge.
1856-66:	Early evangelistic efforts - Sunday school teaching, mothers' meetings, temperance work and the Barnwell Mission.
1866:	Her father, William Hopkins, dies in Cambridge. Ellice suffers a breakdown in her health. She and her mother Caroline move to Percy House, Brighton. Ellice takes up rescue work with Fanny Vicars at the Albion Hill Home.
1870:	Meets Sarah Robinson and Annie Ridley.
1872:	Meets James Hinton.
1874:	Portsmouth Soldiers' Institute opens.
1875:	James Hinton dies.
c.1876:	Hopkins establishes the first branch of the LACFG in Brighton.
c.1878:	Embarks upon her national purity tour to set up further LACFGs and canvas for support for the ISA Act.
1879:	Speaks at the CPA annual conference in May and the Anglican Committee of Convocation on Prostitution in July.
1880:	ISA Act passed.
1881:	Hopkins' mother dies in Brighton.
c.1881:	Meets Frank and Mrs Crossley. Receives £2,000 from them to employ Emily Janes as her political secretary. Meets Bishop George Wilkinson.
1881-2:	Sends Dr. Barnardo £200 to establish a certified Cottage Home for the children coming under the ISA Act.
1883, February:	Speaks at the Lightfoot Institute, Bishops Auckland, Durham at the inaugural meeting of the WCA .
1883, May 25th:	CEPS established at Lambeth Palace under the leadership of Archbishop Benson.
1883 ff:	Continues national purity tour, now for the promotion of the WCA as well as the LACFG.
1884, December:	A typewriter is suggested by Sir Andrew Clarke for Hopkins' palsied arm to enable her to continue writing.
1885:	Dublin purity meeting chaired by the Archbishop of Dublin.
1885	Edinburgh and Glasgow purity meetings chaired by Professor MacLagan. WCA changes its name to the WCS. New York and Chicago are added to the White Cross international membership. CLA Act passed.
1887:	Final breakdown in Hopkins' health. Goes abroad to convalesce for six months with Annie Ridley.
1888:	Meets Bishop Wilkinson in Cannes, who is also ill.

1888, summer:	In the north of England (Harrogate and the Yorkshire Moors) with Emily Janes.
1888, October:	Meets Mrs McIsaac, companion to Hopkins for the remaining 16 years of her life. Spends the following 18 months in Italy and Switzerland as an invalid, painting, sketching and writing.
1889:	Bishop Lightfoot dies.
1890, May:	Bishop George Wilkinson taken ill. Hopkins returns to England. Spends following winter in rooms in Brighton.
1891:	Travels throughout England and Scotland with Mrs. McIsaac. CEPS and WCS merge to form The White Cross League, Church of England Society. Ellice's sister Kate dies in the summer.
1896:	NUWW founded.
1899, Jan. 6th:	Moves to Eaton Place, Brighton.
1900:	Takes a house at 2, Belle Vue Gardens, Brighton. Continues her writing and is visited regularly by her sister Augusta.
1902:	Completes work on *The Story of Life,* her final book.
1903, Aug.	Suffers an attack of asphasia. Her memory begins to fail.
1904, May:	A second attack of asphasia, paralyzes the right side of Hopkins' body and she looses consciousness.
1904, Aug. 15th:	Third seizure.
1904, Sunday Aug. 21st:	Dies at 2, Belle Vue Gardens in Brighton.

APPENDIX II

ELLICE HOPKINS - LIST OF PUBLISHED WORKS

1865 *English Idylls and Other Poems* (Cambridge).

1866 *Fred Williams. A Tale for Boys* (London).

1869 *Home Thoughts for Mothers and Mothers' Meetings,* 2nd. edition (London).
Sick-bed Vows and How to Keep Them. A book for convalescents (London).

1870 *Work Among the Lost. A short account of the Work of Mrs. Fanny Vicars and the Albion Penitents, Brighton* (London).

1872 *Active Service or (Miss Sarah Robinson's) Work Among Our Soldiers* (London).
Does it Answer? A Word for Soldiers (London).

1874 *The Visitation of Dens. An Appeal to the Women of England* (London: Hatchards).

1875 *An English Woman's Work Among Workingmen* (London: New Britain)

1876 *Rose Turquand, 2 vols.* (London, Oxford).

1877 *Work in Brighton; or, Woman's Mission to Women* (London: Hatchards).

1878 *Ladies Associations for the Care of Friendless Girls. Being an Account of the Work in Brighton* (London)
(ed.) *Life and Letters of James Hinton* (London: Kegan Paul and Co.).

1879 *A Plea for the Wider Action of the Church of England in the Prevention of the Degradation of Women* (London: Hatchards).
Christ the Consoler. A Book of Comfort for the Sick (London, Edinburgh, 2nd edition).
Notes on Penitentiary Work (London).
Occupation for the Sick, or practical suggestions to the invalid (London).
Work amongst Working-Men (London and Aylesbury).

1881 *Preventive Work. or, the Care of our Girls* (London: Hatchards).
Little Mary (London).

1882 *Grave Moral Questions addressed to the men and women of England* (London: Hatchards).
On the Early Training of boys and girls. An Appeal to Working-Women (London: Hatchards).
The Legal Protection of the Young (London: Strangeways and Sons).
Village Morality. a letter addressed to clergymen's wives and Christian workers (London: Hatchards).

1883 *Autumn Swallows, a book of Lyrics* (London: Macmillan and Co.).
England's Law for Women and Children (London: Hatchards).
Man and Woman; or, the Christian Ideal (London: Hatchards)
Per Angusta ad Augusta (London: Hatchards).
The Present Moral Crisis (London: Hatchards).
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The Standard of the White Cross. Do We Need it? An Appeal to Clergy and Laity (London: Hatchards).

1886 *Conquering and to Conquer, vols. I and II* (London: Hatchards).
Homely Talk on the New Law for the Protection of Girls. Addressed to Fathers (London: Hatchards).
The Apocalypse of Evil (London: Hatchards).
The Present Moral Crisis, an appeal to women (London: Dyer Bros.).
The Secret and Method of Purity. Expressly Addressed to Christian Workers (London: Hatchards).

1887 with Caroline Paton and M. E. Hudson, *Recreative Evening Homes. How to Work Them* (London: Hatchards).

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The Crocodile and the Little Birds, (London: Hatchards).
The Defaced Image Restored, (London: Hatchards).
The Devil's Chain, (London: Hatchards).
The Greeley Expedition, (London: Hatchards).
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Touching Pitch, (London).
What can we do?, (London: Hatchards).
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APPENDIX III

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APPENDIX IV

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ENDNOTES

Introduction.

1. George Gissing cited in Elaine Showalter, *Sexual Anarchy: Gender and Culture at the Fin de Siecle,* (London: Virago Press, 1992), p. 3.
2. See Judith Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in late-Victorian London* (London: Virago, 1992) pp. 1-14 and Elaine Showalter, *Sexual Anarchy,* pp. 1-18.
3. Known throughout her life as Ellice Hopkins. See Appendix I for a summary of the main events in Hopkins' life.
4. Judith Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society. Women, Class and the State,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 239.
5. See Kathleen Heasman, *Evangelicals in Action,* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1962), pp. 158-163 and F. K. Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy in Nineteenh Century England,* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), pp. 196-200, pp. 210-11 and pp. 215-23.
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7. Melissa Raphael, "J. Ellice Hopkins: The Construction of a Recent Spiritual Feminist Foremother", *Feminist Theology,* no. 13 (September, 1996), pp. 73-95.
8. See Appendix II for a complete chronological listing of Hopkins' published works.
9. Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities,* p. 125.
10. Karen Offen, "Defining Feminism: A Comparative Historical Approach", *Signs,* 14, (1988), p. 152.
11. See Ursula King (ed.), *Religion and Gender,* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), pp. 3-4.
12. Linda Mahood paraphrasing Foucault in *The Magdalenes. Prostitution in the Nineteenth Century* (London, New York: Routledge, 1990), p. 8. In my research, Foucault's ideas are not used as a comprehensive theoretical framework, but rather for the types of questions they raise. See Chapter 1, pp.33-42 of this thesis for an exploration of the limitations of poststructuralist readings of gender as discursive meaning.
13. M. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), p. 26.
14. John Fout, "Sexual Politics in Wilhelmine Germany: The Male Gender Crisis, Moral Purity, and Homophobia", in John C. Fout (ed.), *Forbidden History. The State, Society and the Regulation of Sexuality in Modern Europe* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1992), pp. 259-92.
15. According to Foucault, power is not constrained by physical location or institutional structure,

but is an unstable force "exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of nonegalitarian and mobile relations". Thus, "no-one is outside of power". *The History of Sexuality,* p. 26.

16. "Where there is power there is resistance, or the operation of 'reverse discourse'", M. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality,* p. 101.

17. See Judith Plaskow, "We Are Also Your Sisters: The Development of Women's Studies in Religion", *Women's Studies Quarterly,* vol. 21/1-2, (1993), pp. 9-21 for a comment on this relationship in a contemporary context.

18. Gail Malmgreen, *Religion in the Lives of English Women, 1760-1930* (London: Croom Helm, 1986), p. 2.

Chapter 1 - Redressing the Balance, Transforming the Art: New Theoretical Approaches in Religion and Gender History.

1. Contemporary religious feminist scholarship comprises a growing body of literature. The most recent theoretical investigations into gender and its relevance for the study of religion can be found in Ursula King (ed.), *Religion and Gender.*

2. See Valerie Saiving, "The Human Situation: A Feminine View", in Carol P. Christ and Judith Plaskow (eds.), *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979), pp. 25-42, first published in *The Journal of Religion* (April 1960), for a seminal articulation of this critique.

3. Whilst aware of the conceptual distinction between "women" and "gender", I am intentionally using the terms interchangeably throughout the first half of this chapter so as not to pre-empt the theoretical discussions later on.

4. See for example, Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins* (London: SCM, 1983); Letty M. Russell (ed.), *Feminist Interpretation of the Bible* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985); Fiona Bowie (ed.), *Beguine Spirituality. An Anthology* (London: SPCK, 1989); Emilie Zum Brunn and Georgette Epiney-Burgard, *Women Mystics in Medieval Europe* (New York: Paragon House, 1989) and Frances Beer, *Women and Mystical Experience in the Middle Ages* (Suffolk: Boydell and Brewer, 1992).

5. Malmgreen (ed.) *Religion in the Lives of English Women* , p. 1.

6. McLaughlin, "The Christian Past: Does it Hold a Future for Women?" in Christ and Plaskow (eds.), *Womanspirit Rising,* p. 94.

7. See Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her* and Fiorenza, *Bread Not Stone: the challenge of feminist biblical interpretation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984).

8. See Delores Williams, "Womanist Theology: Black Women's Voices" in J. Plaskow and C. Christ (eds.), *Weaving the Visions: New Patterns in Feminist Spirituality* (New York: Harper Collins, 1989), pp. 179-86; Katie Cannon, *Black Womanist Ethics* (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1988) and my unpublished MA dissertation, "'Our Mothers' Names': History, Religion and Gender in Womanist Perspective", University of Bristol, 1992 .

9. King, *Religion and Gender,* p. 222.

10. ibid, p. 222.

11. Sean Gill, *Women and the Church of England from the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (London: SPCK, 1994), p. 3.

12. Offen, "Defining Feminism: A Comparative Historical Approach", pp. 119-157.

13. Jane Williams, "Recent Writings in Feminist Theology", *Epworth Review* (Sept. 1989), p. 84. I have made use of Williams' incisive references to the use of history by feminist theologians in my following discussion.

14. Mary Jo Weaver, "Widening the Sphere of Discourse: Reflections on the Feminist Perspective in Religious Studies", *Horizons: The Journal of the College Theology Society,* vol. 16 (Fall, 1989), p. 310. Weaver points out that medieval icons such as Julian of Norwich or Hildegard of Bingen held radical concepts of the feminine dimension of the divine which coincided with extreme religious orthodoxy and staunch support of papalism. Sean Gill issues a similar call for critical sensitivity in his illustration of the complex alliance of conservative and radical aspects of faith in the lives of Mary Astell and Florence Nightingale. See Gill, *Women and the Church of England,* pp. 2-3.

15. See also Caroline Walker Bynum, *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1982) and Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1987).

16. "The determination of medieval women writers to speak of themselves more as human than as female, while nonetheless also utilizing rich domestic and female imagery, has no direct connection with current feminism....[however] our dissimilarity from women in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries should not lead us to suggest, as some feminists have, that they were mere victims of patriarchy", Walker Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (New York: Zone Books, 1992), p. 18.

17. ibid, p. 19.

18. The classic text in traditional church history is still Owen Chadwick's *The Victorian Church, Vols. I and II* (London: A&C Black, 1971, 1972). See also J. L. Altholz, "The Mind of Victorian Orthodoxy: Anglican Responses to 'Essays and Reviews', 1860-1864", *Church History,* 51 (1982); P. T. Marsh, *The Victorian Church in Decline* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969); B. M. G. Reardon, *Religion in the Victorian Age* (London: Longmans, 1980); P.Corsi, *Science and Religion: Baden Powell and the Anglican Debate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); M. A. Crowther, "Church Problems and Church Parties", in G. Parsons (ed.), *Religion in Victorian Britain, IV Interpretations* (Manchester: Open University Press, 1988), pp. 4-27; E. R. Norman, *The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth-Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983).

19. See D. W. Bebbington, *The Nonconformist Conscience: Chapel and Church Politics 1870-1914* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1982); J. Kent, *Holding the Fort: Studies in Victorian Revivalism*

(London: Epworth Press, 1978) and Hugh McLeod, *Religion and Irreligion in Victorian England: How Secular was the Working-Class?* (Bangor: Headstart History, 1993).

20. Gill, *Women and the Church of England,* p. 2.

21. See James Obelkovich's helpful discussion of the task of the social history of religion in *Religion and the People 800-1700* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979).

22. See A. D. Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England: Church, Chapel and Social Change, 1740-1914* (London: Longman, 1976); Hugh McLeod, *Class and Religion in the late-Victorian City* (London: Croom Helm, 1974); McLeod, *Religion and the People of Western Europe 1789-1970* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981); Jeffrey Cox, *The English Churches in a Secular Society: Lambeth 1870-1930* (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1982); W. Laquer, *Religion and Respectability: Sunday Schools and Working-Class Culture 1780-1850* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976).

23. For a useful discussion of the relationship between social history and gender history, see Gisela Bock, "Women's History and Gender History: Aspects of an International Debate", *Gender and History,* vol.1 1 (1989), pp. 7-30.

24. Patricia Crawford, *Women and Religion in England 1500-1720* (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 3.

25. See A. Douglas, *The Feminization of American Culture* (New York: Avon Books, 1977); Barbara Welter, "The Feminization of American Religion, 1800-1860", in M. Hartmann and L. Banner (eds.), *Clio's Consciousness Raised: New Perspectives on the History of Women* (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), pp. 137-157; R. Shiels, "The Feminization of American Congregationalism, 1730-1835", *American Quarterly,* vol.33 (1981) pp. 46-62 and Barbara Corrado Pope, "A Heroine without Heroics: The Little Flower of Jesus and Her Times", *Church History,* vol.57 1 (March, 1988), pp. 46-60 for American perspectives on the feminization of religion. J. S. Reed, "'A Female Movement': the Feminization of Anglo-Catholicism", *Anglican and Episcopal History,* vol. 57 (1988), pp. 199-238 provides the only British example. Barbara Corrado Pope's "Immaculate and Powerful: The Marian Revival in the Nineteenth Century" in C. Atkinson, C. Buchanan and M. Miles (eds.) *Immaculate and Powerful: The Female in Sacred Image and Social Reality* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985), pp. 173-200, looks at Europe. Sources most commonly draw from when asserting the predominance of women in congregations are Richard Mudie-Smith's summary of the *Daily News* census of 1902-3 in *The Religious Life of London* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1904), pp. 97-126 and William Booth's *Life and Labour of the People in London, Third Series: Religious Influences, vol.7* (London, 1902, reprint New York: AMS Press, 1970), p. 424.

26. McLeod, *Religion and Irreligion,* p. 48.

27. See my discussion of Frank Prochaska's work in Chapter 2. For an American example of the increased influence of women in the churches see Donald Matthews, *Religion in the Old South* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977) which demonstrates how women, as the benefactors and hostesses of circuit preachers, facilitated the growth and development of Southern Evangelicalism.

28. Pope, "Immaculate and Powerful", p. 175.

29. See Welter, "The Feminization of American Religion" for a discussion of these types of issues.

30. See Gill, *Women and the Church of England,* p. 84.

31. See Crawford, *Women and Religion in England,* pp. 1-17 for a helpful treatment of this issue, although in relation to the early modern period.

32. See for example Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father: Towards a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1974) and Sallie McFague, *Models of God: Theology for an Ecological, Nuclear Age* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988).

33. Chapter 8 of this thesis explores the issue of feminized Christologies in fuller detail, comparing Ellice Hopkins' gendered perceptions of Christ with the related ideas of women like Josephine Butler and Florence Nightingale.

34. Pious women were also major contributors to this literary enterprise. See Sarah Ellis,*Woman's Mission* (London, 1839); Charlotte Yonge's *Womankind* (London: Mozley and Smith, 1877) and Frances Power Cobbe, *The Duties of Women* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1881), pp. 21-27.

35. Kenneth Boyd's *Scottish Church Attitudes to Sex, Marriage and the Family 1850-1914* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1980) provides a seminal study of this topic. There is as yet no English equivalent to Boyd's work.

36. This point is well made in Michael Roper and John Tosh's Introduction to *Manful Assertions: Masculinities in Britain Since 1800* (London, New York: Routledge, 1991), p. 8. See also Tim Carrigan, Bob Connell and John Lee, "Hard and Heavy: Toward a New Sociology of Masculinity" in Michael Kaufman (ed.), *Beyond Patriarchy: Essays by Men on Pleasure, Power and Change* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1987) and Donald Bell, "Up from Patriarchy: Men's Role in Historical Perspective", in Robert A. Lewis (ed.), *Men in Difficult Times* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1981).

37. Roper and Tosh (eds.), *Manful Assertions,* p. 8.

38. David Newsome, *Godliness and Good Learning: Four Studies on a Victorian Ideal* (London: John Murray, 1961); Norman Vance, *The Sinews of the Spirit: The Ideal of Christian Manliness in Victorian Literature and Religious Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) and James Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School: the Emergence and Consolidation of an Educational Ideology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

39. John Tosh, "Domesticity and Manliness in the Victorian Middle Class: The family of Edward White Benson", in Roper and Tosh (eds.), *Manful Assertions,* pp. 44-73.

40. See pp. 37-42 of this chapter for a more detailed discussion of this.

41. John Kent, *The Unacceptable Face: the Modern Church in the Eyes of the Historian* (London; SCM Press, 1987), p. 131.

42. ibid, p. 127.

43. Malmgreen, *Religion in the Lives of English Women ,* p. 2.

44. ibid, p. 2.

45. See Appendix III for the complete list of the texts used in the sample.

46. Cited in Brian Heeney, *The Women's Movement in the Church of England 1850-1930* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), p. 7.

47. See Kenneth Corfield's "Elizabeth Heyrick: Radical Quaker", in Malmgreen, *Religion in the Lives of English Women,* pp. 41-67 and Rickie Burman, "Women in Jewish Religious Life: Manchester 1880-1930" in J. Obelkovich, Lyndal Roper and R. Samuels (eds.) *Disciplines of Faith: Studies in Religion, Politics and Patrriarchy* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987), pp. 37-54 and also Burman, "'She Looketh Well to the Ways of her Household': The Changing Role of Jewish Women in Religious Life c.1880-1930" in Malmgreen, *Religion in the Lives of English Women,* pp. 234-59.

48. Six separate titles on Catholic women, as compared with five on Methodism and four on women in the Salvation Army.

49. Susan O"Brien, "Terra Incognita: the Nun in Nineteenth Century England", *Past and Present,* no. 121 (November, 1988), p. 116.

50. ibid, p. 116.

51. Susan O'Brien, "Lay-Sisters and Good Mothers: Working-Class Women in English Convents 1840-1910", in W.D. Sheils and D. Wood (eds.), *Women in the Church, Studies in Church History, vol. 27,* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), p. 454.

52. Most of the material dealing with Methodist women falls within the formative period of the Methodist revival, the late eighteenth-century, and thus a little too early for this survey.

53. D. Colin Dews, "Ann Carr and the Female Revivalists of Leeds" in Malmgreen, *Religion in the Lives of English Women,* pp. 68-87.

54. See N. H. Murdoch, "Female Ministry in the Thought and Work of Catherine Booth",*Church History,* vol. 53, no. 3 (1984), pp. 384-62.

55. See Ann Higginbotham, "Respectable Sinners: Salvation Army Rescue Work with Unmarried Mothers, 1884-1914" in Malmgreen, *Religion in the Lives of English Women,* pp. 216-233.

56. ibid, p. 218.

57. ibid, p. 229.

58. P. Walker, "'I Live but Not Yet I, for Christ Liveth in Me': Men and Masculinity in the Salvation Army, 1865-1890" in Roper and Tosh (eds.) *Manful Assertions* pp. 92-112.

59. ibid, p. 95.

60. J. K. Hopkins, *A Woman to Deliver her People: Joanna Southcott and English Millenarianism in an Era of Revolution* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982).

61. Barbara Taylor, *Eve and the New Jerusalem: Socialism and Feminism in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Virago Press, 1983), p. 158. See Chapter 8, pp. 236-38 of this thesis for a fuller consideration of female messianism.

62. Alex Owen also explains how late nineteenth-century female mediumship constituted a particularly effective power strategy for women predicated upon both the dominant cultural view of womanhood

as passive and self-negating, yet spiritually pre-eminent. This proved an effective combination for the female spiritualist as empty vessel and receiver of divine communication. See Owen, *The Darkened Room: Women, Power and Spiritualism in Late Victorian England,* (London: Virago Press, 1989).

63. *A Valiant Victorian: The Life and Times of Mother Emily Ayckbowm 1836-1900* (London: Mowbray, 1964).

64. T. J. Williams, *Priscilla Lydia Sellon. The Restorer after Three Centuries of the Religious Life in the English Church* (London: SPCK, 2nd ed. 1965).

65. Sean Gill, "The Power of Christian Ladyhood: Priscilla Lydia Sellon and the Creation of Anglican Sisterhoods" in S. Mews (ed.) *Modern Religious Rebels: Essays Presented to John Kent* (London: Epworth Press, 1993), p. 158.

66. ibid, p. 160.

67. Olive Anderson, "Women Preachers in Mid-Victorian Britain: Some Reflexions on Feminism, Popular Religion and Social Change", *The Historical Journal,* 12, 3 (1969), p. 480.

68. Heeney, "The Beginnings of Church Feminism: Women and the Councils of the Church of England 1897-1919" in Malmgreen, *Religion in the Lives of English Women,* p. 264.

69. Anderson, "Women Preachers in Mid-Victorian Britain", p. 474.

70. Heeney, "The Beginnings of Church Feminism" in Malmgreen, *Religion in the Lives of English Women,* p. 266.

71. Anderson, "Women Preachers in Mid-Victorian Britain", p. 484.

72. Heeney, *The Women's Movement in the Church of England,* p. 98.

73. See Elizabeth Roberts, *A Woman's Place: An Oral History of Working-Class Women* (Oxford; Blackwell, 1984), pp. 1-9 for a useful introduction to the possibilities and problems of studying working women.

74. June Purvis, "Women's History in Britain: An Overview", *The European Journal of Women's Studies,* vol.2/1 (February, 1995), pp. 7-20. I have drawn from the work of Purvis throughout the following section.

75. See for example, Jane Lewis (ed.), *Labour and Love: Women's Experience of Home and Family, 1850-1940* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986) and Carol Smart (ed.), *Regulating Womanhood: Historical Essays on Marriage, Motherhood and Sexuality* (London, New York: Routledge, 1992).

76. Malmgreen, *Religion in the Lives of English Women,* p. 2.

77. According to Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, "adding women to the received account - especially in the form of a few more neglected worthies or a lot more descriptive social history - does not necessarily change anything substantive in our manner of writing history". Fox-Genovese, "Placing Women's History in History", *New Left Review,* no. 133 (1982), p. 14.

78. Joan Scott, "The Problem of Invisibility", in S. J. Kleinberg (ed.), *Retrieving Women's History: Changing Perceptions of the Role of Women in Politics and Society* (Oxford: Berg, 1988), p. 12.

79. Malmgreen, *Religion in the Lives of English Women,* p. 2.

80. See Joan Kelly-Gadol's essay, "Did Women have a Renaissance?" in R. Bridenthal and C. Koonz (eds.), *Becoming Visible: Women in European History* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977), pp. 137-64 for a seminal discussion of periodization.

81. Judith Bennett, "Feminism and History", in *Gender and History,* vol. 1/3 (Autumn, 1989), p. 253.

82. Many practitioners of women's history have disavowed connections with political labels. Others exhibit an overt anti-feminist tendency. Judith Bennett has commented on an increasing trend towards less explicit feminist perspectives in women's history scholarship, and bemoans the corresponding loss of political nerve and "feminist indignation". One may also wonder to what extent the increasing severance of feminist perspectives from women's history impinges upon its contemporary relevance? Bennett has argued that the feminist perspective may well be the cutting edge that continues to inform contemporary theory and define issues for research. Bennett, "Feminism and History", pp. 251-72.

83. Adrienne Rich, *Of Woman Born* (London: Virago, 1977), p. 57 cited in Bennett, "Feminism and History", p. 260.

84. See for example, the exchange between Bridget Hill, "Women's History: a study in change, continuity or standing still?", *Women's History Review,* 2/1 (1993), pp. 5-22 and Judith Bennett "Feminism and History". See also Brian Harrison and James MacMillan, "Some Feminist Betrayals of Women's History", *The Historical Journal,* no. 26 (1983), pp. 375-89.

85. Hill, "Women's History", p. 19.

86. See Bennett, "Feminism and History", p. 261.

87. ibid, p. 260.

88. Fox-Genovese, "Placing Women's History in History", p.14.

89. King, *Religion and Gender,* p. 8.

90. Cited in M. Rosaldo and L. Lamphere (eds.), *Woman, Culture and Society* (California: Stanford University Press, 1974), p. 42.

91. See Fox-Genovese, "Placing Women's History in History" pp. 5-29 and Joan Scott, "The Problem of Invisibility" , pp. 5-29.

92. Roper and Tosh (eds.), *Manful Assertions,* p. 2.

93. June Purvis, "Women's History in Britain", p. 15.

94. ibid, p. 15. See also Mary Evans, "The Problem of Gender for Women's Studies", in J. Aaron and S. Walby (eds.), *Out of the Margins: Women's Studies in the Nineties* (London: Falmer Press, 1991) p. 73.

95. L. Banner, "A Reply to 'Culture et Pouvoir' from the Perspective of United States Women's History", *Journal of Women's History,* 1/1 (1989), pp. 101-7.

96. Roper and Tosh (eds.), *Manful Assertions,* p. 7. As Roper and Tosh point out, many feminists have written on the costs of patriarchy to men. See Cynthia Cockburn - "our culture cruelly constrains them, in varying degrees, to be the bearers of a gender identity that deforms and harms them as much as it damages women". Cockburn, "Masculinity, the Left and Feminism", in Rowena Chapman and Jonathan Rutherford (eds.) *Male Order, Unwrapping Masculinity*

(London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1988), pp. 316-317, cited in Roper and Tosh (eds.), *Manful Assertions,* p. 7.

97. ibid, p. 7.

98. ibid, p. 10.

99. See John Tosh's article "Domesticity and Manliness" for an exception to this general rule.

100. Joan Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), p. 6.

101. As Scott argues, "The point of new historical investigation is to disrupt the notion of fixity", *Gender and the Politics of History,* p. 43. See also Denise Riley, *'Am I that Name?' Feminism and the Category of 'Women' in History* (London: Macmillan, 1988).

102. Jeffrey Weeks, "Foucault for Historians", *History Workshop Journal,* no. 14 (1982), p. 111.

103. See Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History,* p. 2.

104. For example the Eve/Mary symbolism of womanhood.

105. According to Foucault, discursive practices are "embodied in technical processes, in institutions, and in patterns of general behaviour. The unity of a discourse, therefore, does not derive from the fact that it describes a 'real object', but from the social practices that actually form the object about which discourses speak. The 'social' is constituted through these practices" - Weeks, "Foucault for Historians", p. 111. Therefore, "the historian's task is to reread the discursive practices which make them meaningful and which change radically from one period to another" - Weeks, "Foucault for Historians", p. 112.

106. Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History,* pp. 1-10 for a discussion of this idea.

107. There is a vast amount of material on this subject, but see especially Lawrence Stone and Gabrielle Spiegel, "History and Postmodernism", *Past and Present,* no. 135 (May, 1992), pp. 189-208; J. Hoff, "The Pernicious Effects of Poststructuralism on Women's History", *The Chronicle of Higher Education,* (20th October, 1993), B1-B2; S. Jackson, "The Amazing Deconstructing Woman", *Trouble and Strife,* vol. 25 (1992), pp. 25-31; and Susan Kingsley Kent,"Mistrials and Diatribulations: a reply to Joan Hoff",*Women's History Review,* 5/1 (1996), pp. 9-18.

108. Stone, "History and Postmodernism", p. 190.

109. Jackson, "The Amazing Deconstructing Woman", pp. 25-31 and Joan Hoff, "Gender as a Postmodern Category of Paralysis", *Women's History Review,* vol.3/2 (1994), pp. 149-68.

110. Hoff, "Gender as a Postmodern Category of Paralysis", p. 150.

Chapter 2 - Women's History and the Role of Religion

1. See Malmgreen (ed.) *Religion in the Lives of English Women,* p. 1.

2. Crawford, *Women and Religion in England,* p. 4.

3. Malmgreen (ed.), *Religion in the Lives of English Women,* p. 3.

4. See for example, Barbara Caine's study of Frances Power Cobbe in *Victorian Feminists*

(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 103-149, and Sheila Jeffreys' treatment of the theosophist Frances Swiney in *The Spinster and Her Enemies,* pp. 27-53.

5. Kathryn Kish Sklar, "The Last Fifteen Years" in Hilah F. Thomas and Rosemary Skinner Keller (eds.), *Women in New Worlds: Historical Perspectives on the Wesleyan Tradition* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1981), pp. 48-68.

6. See Appendix IV for key texts on religion in nineteenth-century British women's history used in this survey.

7. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America, 2 vols.* (New York, 1945), II, bk. 3, p. 211, cited in Linda Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History" *Journal of American History,* vol.75/1 (1988), p. 10. See Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place", pp. 9-39 for a fuller discussion of the changing metaphor of the separate spheres.

8. Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place", p.12 and Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860", *American Quarterly,* vol.18/2 (1966), pp. 151, 158.

9. See Purvis, "Women's History in Britain: An Overview" for a detailed exploration of past, present and future approaches to British women's history.

10. See for example, Jill Liddington and Jill Norris, *One Hand Tied Behind Us: The Rise of the Women's Suffrage Movement* (London: Virago, 1978) and *David Morgan, Suffragists and Liberals: The Politics of Woman Suffrage in England* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1975).

11. C. Hall, "The early formation of Victorian domestic ideology" in S. Burman (ed.) *Fit Work for Women* (London: Croom Helm, 1979), p. 29.

12. Welter, "The Feminization of American Religion: 1800-1860", p. 139.

13. ibid, p. 139. Three years later, in *The Feminization of American Culture,* Ann Douglas traced the overlapping of clergy and female spheres again, this time in the world of literary fiction. Douglas offered a highly provocative appraisal of the feminization of religion which attributed twentieth-century intellectual impoverishment to the propagation of sentimentalized forms of popular Victorian spirituality.

14. One interesting exception to the notion of the "feminization of religion" is that of historian Patricia Branca who argues for the *declining* influence of religion in women's lives. Despite the persistent image of the Victorian middle-class woman as pious, she claims that "religion lost some of its meaning for middle class women" or was at least beginning to be modified. This was indicated by the "increasing secularism of the material read by women". Whereas in the earlier decades of the century printed matter had been primarily religious, by "the second half of the century" Branca contends, "the literature was almost completely lacking in religious inspiration. The few religious magazines such as *The British Mothers' Magazines,* constantly bemoaned the decline of religion among the fairer sex". The editorial policy of the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* was to exclude all religious composition from its pages, refusing to publish religious poetry or answer theological dilemmas. "Looking through the hundreds of magazines printed in the nineteenth century for women, one is left with the impression that women were more concerned with the condition of their wash or

the nature of their complexion than the state of their souls". Patricia Branca, *Silent Sisterhood: Middle-Class Women in the Victorian Home* (London: Croom Helm, 1975), p. 147.

15. Taylor, *Eve and the New Jerusalem,* p. 127.
16. Sklar,"The Last Fifteen Years", p. 55.
17. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in Nineteenth-century America", *Signs,* 1 (Autumn 1975), pp. 1-29.
18. Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual", p. 13.
19. Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy,* p. vii.
20. See Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy* and also Nancy Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: Woman's Sphere in New England, 1780-1835* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1977), especially her chapter on "Domesticity", pp. 63-100 for a seminal presentation of this argument with regard to the American scene.
21. Prockaska, *Women and Philanthropy,* pp. 47-72.
22. See Chapter 3, pp. 82-4 of this thesis for a more detailed treatment of this topic.
23. Martha Vicinus, *Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women 1850-1920* (London, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), p. 48.
24. ibid, p. 48
25. ibid, p. 83
26. See Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy,* pp. 222-30 for a summary of this development.
27. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, in Ellen DuBois, Mari Jo Buhle, Temma Kaplan, Gerda Lerner and Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "Politics and Culture in Women's History: A Symposium", *Feminist Studies,* 6 (Spring, 1980), p. 55.
28. For an early example of this debate, see the roundtable discussion in Ellen DuBois et al, "Politics and Culture in Women's History", pp. 26-64.
29. Banks argued for the existence of a lively domestic feminist ideology fostered by the religious values of the separate spheres, alongside the dominant liberal humanist tradition of the equality of the sexes and the socialist utopian vision of free thought and communitarian rights. See Olive Banks, *Faces of Feminism: A Study of Feminism as a Social Movement* (Blackwell: Oxford, 1993 edition), pp. 13-27.
30. ibid, p. 25.
31. Judith Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight,* p. 75.
32. Lucy Bland, *Banishing the Beast: English Feminism and Sexual Morality 1885-1914* (London: Penguin, 1995), p. 51.
33. Jane Rendall, *The Origins of Modern Feminism: Women in Britain, France and the United States 1780-1860* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1985), p. 107.
34. Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy,* p. 229. Prochaska makes a helpful distinction between "a belief in the emancipation of women and support for women's rights", p. 230. The former signalled freedom from customary restraints and the ability to move around at will in public spaces and could feasibly leave out politics. For many women, philanthropy was an end in itself, not a preface to the

vote. Relieving the poor was tangible and immediate, whereas the vote appeared a utopian and abstract vision. Many, like Octavia Hill, opposed the franchise for women.

35. Banks, *Faces of Feminism,* p. 27.

36. This may well have been as a result of the distinctive historical expression of American feminism. The mass political mobilization of Frances Willard's Women's Christian Temperance Union and the abolitionist influence of pioneering Quaker feminists such as the Grimke sisters or Lucretia Mott are certainly unique to the American scene. Yet the wealth of publications by American scholars in this area also suggests that as well as historical accuracy, lack of corresponding British research may have something to do with the underdevelopment of the collaboration between evangelical religious affiliation and feminist proclivities.

37. Rendall, *Origins of Modern Feminism,* p. 106.

38. See Banks, *Faces of Feminism,* pp. 29-31.

39. The term "prosopographic" is used by Philippa Levine in *Feminist Lives in Victorian Britain* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990) to describe studies which include an examination of the social and familial backgrounds of certain feminists, as well as their personalities and careers. See also Lawrence Stone, "Prosopography" in F. Gilbert and S. R. Gaubard (eds.), *Historical Studies Today* (New York: Norton, 1971), pp. 107-40.

40. O. Banks, *Becoming a Feminist: the Social Origins of 'First Wave' Feminism,* (Sussex: Wheatsheaf Books Ltd., 1986), p. 15, p. 22.

41. ibid, p. 15.

42. ibid, p. 60.

43. Levine, *Feminist Lives in Victorian Britain,* p. 31.

44. ibid, pp. 34-51.

45. Banks, *Becoming a Feminist,* p. 20.

46. See Table 23 in Banks, *Becoming a Feminist,* p. 87.

47. ibid, p.159.

48. Barbara Caine, "Feminist Biography and Feminist History", *Women's History Review,* vol.3/2 (1994), p. 253.

49. What constitutes a feminist auto/biography and whether there is anything distinctive about it as a genre is an issue of current concern for scholars. See for example, Caine,"Feminist Biography", pp. 247-61; L. Stanley, "Moments of Writing: Is There a Feminist Auto/Biography?" *Gender and History,* vol.2/1 (1990), pp. 58-67; Anne Curthoys, "Feminism, Biography and Autobiography", *Australian Feminist Studies,* vol.9 (1989), pp. 111-17.

50. Caine, "Feminist Biography", p. 256.

51. Emilie Dilke's self-confessed method of atonement for example, was to lie prostrate upon the bare stones, her arms outstretched in the shape of a cross. See Levine, *Feminist Lives in Victorian Britain,* p. 36.

52. E. Showalter, "Florence Nightingale's Feminist Complaint: Women, Religion and *Suggestions for Thought* ", *Signs,* 6/3 (1981), p. 396.

53. See Caine, *Victorian Feminists,* pp. 162-3 and pp. 115-118. See also Carol Bauer, "The Role of Religion in the Creation of a Philosophy of Feminism: the case of Frances Power Cobbe, *Anima,* 10/1 (1983), pp. 60-70.

54. Margaret Jackson, *The **Real** Facts of Life: Feminism and the Politics of Sexuality, c1850-1940* (London: Taylor and Francis, 1994), p. 2.

55. See Philippa Levine, *Victorian Feminism 1850-1900* (London: Hutchinson Education, 1987), pp. 128-155 for a useful overview of this topic.

56. The main texts that deal with these issues are cited throughout the remainder of this chapter in the relevant discussions.

57. See for example, Judith Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society;* Judith Walkowitz, "Male Vice and Feminist Virtue: Feminism and the Politics of Prostitution in Nineteenth-Century Britain", *History Workshop Journal,* 13 (1982), pp. 79-93 and Paul McHugh, *Prostitution and Victorian Social Reform* (London: Croom Helm, 1980).

58. See Margaret Jackson's chapter on "Militant Feminism and the Double Standard" in *The **Real** Facts of Life,* pp. 34-59.

59. Christabel Pankhurst, *The Great Scourge and How to End It* (London: WSPU, 1913), p. 98. See also Lucy Re-Bartlett, *Sex and Sanctity* (London: Longmans, 1912) and Cicely Hamilton, *Marriage as a Trade* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1909, reprint London: Women's Press, 1981).

60. Ellen DuBois and Linda Gordon, "Seeking Ecstasy on the Battlefield: Danger and Pleasure in Nineteenth Century Feminist Sexual Thought", *Feminist Studies,* vol.9/1 (Spring, 1983), p. 8.

61. The *Woman's Signal* (29 Nov. 1894), cited in Vicinus, *Independent Women,* p. 8.

62. Josephine Butler, *Personal Reminiscences of a Great Crusade* (London: H. Marshall and Son, 1896), p. 73.

63. Lynda Nead, *Myths of Sexuality. Representations of Women i n Victorian Britain* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988), p. 157.

64. John Maynard, *Victorian Discourses on Sexuality and Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 3. In arguing for the interrelatedness of religious and sexual discourse, this study is also informed by the work of Michael Mason, who has argued that the prurience popularly attributed to this period cannot be accounted for merely by "the fairly puny forces" of bourgeois puritanism or evangelical piety. Mason does not deny the existence of such anti-sensual sentiment. On the contrary, he argues that the vitality and extent to which such doctrines were embraced suggests that it emanated from more powerful progressive and secularist quarters instead. Where Mason's theory proves particularly helpful to my thesis is in his corresponding discussion of the pro-sensualism of varying religious groups, an argument which is followed through in Chapter 7 of this thesis. Michael Mason, *The Making of Victorian Sexual Attitudes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

65. Maynard, *Victorian Discourses on Sexuality and Religion,* p. 7.

66. Diane MacDonnell, *Theories of Discourse* (London: Blackwell, 1986), p. 26.

67. Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* p. 2.

68. ibid, p.127.

69. ibid, p. 2. Jeffrey Weeks has similarly defined purity in terms of a historical "moment "of moral panic which crystallized broader social and political anxieties into a rigid normative codification of heterosexuality, criminalizing so-called "deviant" forms of sexuality. See Jeffrey Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society: The Regulation of Sexuality Since 1800* (London: Longmans, 1981).

70. Mason, *The Making of Victorian Sexual Attitudes,* p. 216.

71. ibid, p. 218.

72. See Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society,* and "Male Vice and Feminist Virtue"; Nancy Wood, "Prostitution and Feminism in Nineteenth-Century Britain", *m/f* (1981), pp. 61-77 and Deborah Gorham, "The 'Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon' Re-Examined: Child Prostitution and the Idea of Childhood in Late-Victorian England", *Victorian Studies,* 21/3 (Spring, 1978), pp. 353-79.

73. Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society,* p. 7.

74. Wood, "Prostitution and Feminism", p. 70.

75. Mason, *The Making of Victorian Sexual Attitudes,* p. 216.

76. See Jeffreys, *The Spinster and her Enemies,* p.7 and p. 9.

77. Frank Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities,* p. 119.

78. ibid, p. 92.

79. Bland, *Banishing the Beast,* p. 118.

80. Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* p. 2.

81. ibid, p. 96.

82. ibid, p. 95.

83. Jeffreys, *The Spinster and her Enemies,* p. 38.

84. Bland, *Banishing the Beast,* p. 52.

85. Jackson, *The **Real** Facts of Life,* p. 7. Jeffreys also argues that "Two distinctly different currents flowed into the social purity movement of the 1880s" - revivalism and agitation against the CD Acts. See Jeffreys, *The Spinster and Her Enemies,* p. 7.

86. ibid, p. 27.

87. See John Kent, *Holding the Fort.* Edward Bristow is one of few commentators to note that social purity was broader than evangelicalism, and that it spanned from Salvationists to Quakers and Catholics. Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* pp. 94-121.

88. See for example, Heeney, *The Women's Movement in the Church of England* .

89. See Judith Plaskow, "We are also your Sisters" pp. 9-21 for a discussion of this problem within a contemporary context.

Chapter 3 - Ellice Hopkins: Background and Influences.

1. See my forthcoming "Ellice Hopkins, (1836-1904)", in Colin Matthews (gen. ed.), *New Dictionary of National Biography,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

2. Rosa M. Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir* (London: Wells Gardner, Darton and Co., 1907), p. 9.

I have drawn extensively upon Rosa Barrett's text throughout this chapter. Caroline Boys was 37 years old when she gave birth to Ellice. A gifted musician, she died in Brighton in 1881, aged 82. According to Ellice, who nursed her mother until her death, she had been failing mentally for some time and was unaware of anyone at the end. See her comments in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* pp. 124-5.

3. "Having the old ideas as to woman's work, Mrs. Hopkins shrank from publicity for woman, and was herself very gentle, quiet, and domestic. Hence it must have often been a severe trial to her that her daughter should take up work which led her along such thorny roads, and into such a glare of publicity", Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 125.

4. Hopkins, cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 24.

5. ibid, p. 10. Hopkins' veneration of her father compares interestingly with that of Josephine Butler's close relationship with her father, John Grey. See Barbara Caine, *Victorian Feminists,* pp. 156-164.

6. See T. A. Walker, *Admissions to Peterhouse, or St. Peter's College in the University of Cambridge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1912), pp. 417-418 for the entry on William Hopkins, which includes his academic qualifications, achievements, lists of pupils and key works. See also the entry in Leslie Stephen (ed.), *Dictionary of National Biography, Vol. IX* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. 1233-4.

7. See Crosbie Smith, "Geologists and mathematicians: the rise of physical geology", in P. M. Harman (ed.), *Wranglers and Physicists. Studies on Cambridge Physics in the nineteenth century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), p. 60.

8. B. M. G. Reardon, *From Coleridge to Gore. A Century of Religious Thought in Britain* (London: Longman, 1971), p. 285.

9. Adam Sedgwick, *A Discourse on the Studies of the University,* 2nd edn., (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1834), p. 14, cited in Smith, "Geologists and mathematicians", p. 61. According to the Evangelical Anglican Sedgwick (1785-1873), natural phenomena provided "the clearest proof" of the reality of divine attributes. Generally acknowledged as the father of geological science, Sedgwick was a close, personal friend of William Hopkins from whom Hopkins had first acquired his enthusiasm for the subject.

10. By the end of the nineteenth-century, the role of science as the handmaid of religious doctrine was under increasing attack by a professionalized scientific community. See Francis Galton's *English Men of Science. Their Nature and Nurture* (New York: Appleton and Co., 1875). Several good contemporary treatments of the religion/science controversy exist. See for example, Reardon, *From Coleridge to Gore,* pp. 285-312; T. W. Heyck, *The Transformation of Intellectual Life in Victorian England* (London & Canberra: Croom Helm, 1982), pp. 81-119; Owen Chadwick, *The Victorian Church,* Vol. I, Chap VIII; Vol. II, Chaps. I, II, III, VIII; Josef Altholz, "The Warfare of Conscience with Theology", in Josef Altholz (ed.), *The Mind and Art of Victorian England* (Minneapolis, 1967), pp. 58-77 and Frank M. Turner, *Between Science and Religion: The Reaction of Scientific Naturalism in late-Victorian England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974).

11. Lyell is now recognized as a forerunner of Darwin, in that his work subjected the entire inorganic

natural realm to the principle of developmental law. See Reardon, *From Coleridge to Gore,* pp. 288-89.

12. William Hopkins, cited in Crosbie Smith," Geologists and mathematicians", p. 165.

13. William Hopkins, *Remarks on Certain Proposed Regulations Respecting the Study of the University* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1841), p. 10, cited in David B. Wilson, "The educational matrix: physics education at early-Victorian Cambridge, Edinburgh and Glasgow Universities", in Harman (ed.), *Wranglers and Physicists,* p. 16.

14. Hopkins' concept of catastrophism argued against Lyell's more dominant theory of uniformitarianism, in which changes in geological formations were regarded as of uniform or even intensity. See William Whewell's definitions of these two terms cited in Crosbie Smith, "Geologists and mathematicians", p. 59.

15. Sheldon Rothblatt, *The Revolution of the Dons: Cambridge and Society in Victorian England* (London: Faber and Faber, 1968), p. 198.

16. T. A. Walker, *Admissions to Peterhouse,* p. 418. The "Cambridge programme" of physics was distinguished by its emphasis on "mixed mathematics", which included geometry and problem-solving, to which Hopkins gave special emphasis in his tutorials. He is noted by Wilson as one of the leading figures responsible for the successful format of the Mathematical Tripos. See Wilson, "The educational matrix", p. 150. According to Harman, "nearly half the chairs in physics in British universities were held by wranglers, men who had obtained first-class degrees in the Cambridge Mathematical Tripos". Harman (ed.) *Wranglers and Physicists,* p. 1. D. A. Winstanley records, "In 1849, when he [Hopkins] had been engaged in private tuition for twenty years, he claimed to have among his pupils one hundred and seventy-five wranglers, of whom one hundred and eight had been in the first ten, forty-four in the first three, and seventeen had been Senior Wranglers;...in 1854 seven of the first nine Wranglers, including the first three, were his pupils", *Early Victorian Cambridge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940), p. 41.

17. Sir Francis Galton (1822-91), was cousin to Darwin whose work on the study of heredity and eugenics provided a new, albeit questionable dimension to Victorian social science; Sir William Thomson, Lord Kelvin, (1824-1907) created Britain's first physics laboratory in Glasgow which produced developments in the laws of thermo-dynamics, refrigeration, telegraphs and atomic theory; James Clerk Maxwell, Senior Wrangler under Hopkins, went on to become the first professor of the distinguished Cavendish Laboratory.

18. Karl Pearson (ed.), *The Life, Letters and Labours of Francis Galton, 4 vols. (1914-1930), vol. I,* p. 163, cited in Rothblatt, *Revolution of the Dons,* p. 191. See Rothblatt for an excellent account of the shift in Cambridge teaching during the early decades of the nineteenth-century, which had passed out of the colleges and into the hands of private tutors almost exclusively by the 1840s.

19. "A well-paid coach had to be competitive, sure of his technique, well-organised and willing to work at least six hard tutorial hours every day, as well as grade written exercises and problem sets", Rothblatt, *Revolution of the Dons,* p. 199.

20. ibid, p. 200. In *Prosperity and Parenthood: A Study of Family Planning among the Victorian*

Middle-Classes (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1954), pp. 103-12, J. and O. Banks cite £900 as indicative of an upper-class income bracket in 1851. Nor did William Hopkins appear to charge the highest fees for coaching. "Francis Galton enthusiastically wrote home in the 1840s that William Hopkins, the famous mathematics coach, charged 'only £72 per annum instead of £100 currently reported: this will make a jolly difference to my finances'", Galton, in Pearson (ed.) *Life, Letters and Labours of Francis Galton, vol. I,* p.163, cited in Rothblatt, *Revolution of the Dons,* pp. 199-200.

21. See Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* pp. 66-70.

22. On one occasion, in the early 1860s, Hopkins' and her sister had taken a house belonging to the Cameron family, who had moved to Freshwater to be close to the Tennysons. Hopkins was clearly impressed by the warmth and friendliness with which Julia Margaret Cameron (1815-1879) welcomed her. "I can see her stepping across the common lawn of the two houses to greet me, the day after my arrival...and the next moment finding myself tucked under her arm and talking to her of things in heaven and earth as if I had known her all my life", cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 68. Cameron's portraits comprise a roll-call of some of the most celebrated Victorian artists, poets and writers. Dimbola Lodge, Freshwater Bay is now run by the Julia Margaret Cameron Trust as a Gallery and Photographic Museum.

23. ibid, p. 69.

24. Reviews cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* pp. 60-1.

25. ibid, p. 66.

26. George MacBeth (ed.), *The Penguin Book of Victorian Verse* (London: Penguin, 1969), p. 274.

27. From "Life in Death", in *Autumn Swallows: A Book of Lyrics* (London: Macmillan & Co.1883), pp. 119-120, also included in MacBeth, (ed.) *Penguin Book of Victorian Verse,* pp. 274-275. Hopkins' dualisms are often interpreted in naturalistic paradigms. The poem "Two Voices" for example, contrasts the jubilant strains of the skylarks above the cornfields with the plaintive cry of the sea-birds tossed in the storm above the crashing waves. See *Autumn Swallows,* pp. 87-89. Barrett attributes this dualistic approach to the fact that whilst "born a poet, she was scientific by training, and thus looked at Nature with a two-fold vision". Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 65. *Autumn Swallows* was reviewed favourably by the *Pall Mall Gazette* and the *Westminster Review* - "There is real substance in these poems, the substance of genuine thought, and of a powerful if sombre imagination", *Pall Mall Gazette,* cited at the end of *Village Morality, a letter addressed to clergymen's wives and Christian workers* (London: Hatchards, 1882), p. 31.

28. Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 4. Hopkins herself admitted, "It was a very great and real sacrifice to relinquish all these" and that "My poems went down the pit with the rest of me", cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 5.

29. See Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy;* Heeney, *The Women's Movement in the Church of England* and Gill, *Women and the Church of England* for full discussions of the breadth and variety of women's philanthropic endeavours. According to Louisa Hubbard, figures by the end of the

century showed well in excess of half a million unpaid women volunteers in the Anglican church alone. Louisa Hubbard, in A. Burdett-Coutts (ed.) *Woman's Mission: A Series of Congress Papers on the Philanthropic Work of Women by Eminent Writers* (London, 1893), p. 364, cited in Heeney, *The Women's Movement in the Church of England,* p. 19.

30. Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 12. Sunday-school teaching proved a very popular and acceptable form of female activity. By 1862, there were, according to Bishop Mackenzie, over 300,000 women involved in Sunday school classes in England and Wales. Cited in Heeney, *The Women's Movement in the Church of England,* p. 33. Hopkins found temperance work the most disagreeable, recording an "intense repugnance" towards her regular Saturday evening public-house visitations undertaken with another lady temperance worker. See Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 32. For a comprehensive discussion of women's work in early English temperance reform see Lilian L. Shiman, "'Changes are Dangerous': Women and Temperance in Victorian England", in Malmgreen (ed.) *Religion in the Lives of English Women,* pp. 193-216 and Lilian L. Shiman, *Women and Leadership in Nineteenth-Century England* (London: Macmillan Press, 1992).

31. Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 12.

32. Hopkins, *An English Woman's Work Among Workingmen,* (London: New Britain, 1875), p. 27.

33. ibid, pp. 11-29 for a full account of this episode.

34. ibid, p. 42.

35. ibid, p. 30.

36. See Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 38.

37. ibid, p. 37.

38. *Work in Brighton; or, Woman's Mission to Women* (London: Hatchards, 1877) sold 20,000-30,000 copies within a few months of its publication. To what extent the pamphlet owed its success to Nightingale's recommendation is difficult to tell. "From my own experience in long past years, I am quite sure that the way indicated in "Work in Brighton" is the only way; and I would entreat the women of England to read the little book, and then judge, each for herself, in what way she can help a cause which, for the sake of home and family, has a claim on every woman. I bid the work "God speed" with all my heart, and soul, and strength" - Florence Nightingale in Hopkins, *Work in Brighton,* p. 1.

39. See Sarah Robinson, *Yarns* (London, 1892) pp. 3-5 for an account of this meeting.

40. See Jennie Chappell's chapter on "Sarah Robinson" in *Noble Work by Noble Women* (London: S. W. Partridge and Co., n.d., but pre-1907) pp. 63-106, and Shiman, *Women and Leadership,* pp. 115-117 for a brief acount of Robinson's temperance and rescue career amongst the British army and the garrison prostitutes. See also my forthcoming "Sarah Robinson (b.1834)" in Matthews (gen. ed.), *New Dictionary of National Biography* .

41. Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 51. British soldiers docking and embarking often left destitute wives and children behind them. The purpose of the Portsmouth Institute was to care for them as well as the families of soldiers killed or wounded abroad. *Active Service or (Miss Sarah Robinson's) Work Among Our Soldiers* (London, 1872) which depicted Robinson's admirable

struggle to launch the enterprise, shows Hopkins as an ardent admirer of Robinson's work. She remained on the Council of the Institute and a senior trustee for many years. Edward Bristow has described Hopkins and Robinson as "soulmates: sublimated and suffering evangelical spinsters who were driven to do good in unorthodox ways", *Vice and Vigilance,* p. 96. This is an insufficiently nuanced reading, as my thesis will indicate.

42. See for example, Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual" for the United States. For Britain see Lillian Faderman, *Surpassing the Love of Men, Romantic Friendship and Love Between Women from the Renaissance to the Present* (London: The Women's Press, 1985); Sheila Jeffreys, *The Spinster and her Enemies;* Martha Vicinus, "Distance and Desire: English Boarding-School Friendships", *Signs*, 9 (1984), pp. 600-22, and Vicinus, *Independent Women.*

43. See Chapter 2 of this thesis, pp.47-50 for a discussion of this concept.

44. According to Emily Janes, later secretary to the National Union of Women Workers, Hopkins was "the confidant of many troubled souls, with a touching belief in human possibilities". Theirs was a loyal friendship broken only by death. Cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 243. Janes was similarly described by Hopkins as her "beloved secretary" who made life " a perfect feather-bed", ibid, p. 150. I have been able to discover very little about Kate and Augusta Hopkins, Ellice's two sisters. Ellice was present at Kate's death sometime during the 1890s. On Ellice's own death certificate, Augusta, married as Augusta Martin and living at Cornwall Gardens, London, was recorded present.

45. See Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p.39. Hopkins was staying at the time with a family friend, Dr. John Griffith, to whom she dedicated her book for convalescents, *Christ the Consoler, A Book of Comfort for the Sick* (London, Edinburgh, 2nd ed. 1879).

46. ibid, pp. 64-84. Little is known about Annie Ridley. She had previously written a biography of *Frances Mary Buss and her work for Education* (Longmans Green, 1895) which exhibits clear feminist sympathies, but was too ill to write Hopkins' biography herself. Hence Barrett's dedication of the book "To Annie E. Ridley, to whose inspiring friendship this [Hopkins] life owed so much and without whose help and wise guidance this record would never have been written".

47. Ridley, cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* pp. 268-9 .

48. See Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual", p. 3.

49. Faderman, *Surpassing the Love of Men,* p. 159.

50. Cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 225.

51. ibid, p. 271.

52. Lillian Faderman's *Surpassing the Love of Men* was a pioneering attempt to restore the visibility of close female friendships in terms of a submerged lesbian heritage. Drawing on personal correspondence and diaries, she evidences declarations of undying love and fidelity between celebrated women like Geraldine Jewsbury and Jane Welsh Carlyle, George Eliot and Edith Simcox. Faderman, along with Sheila Jeffreys and Martha Vicinus, does not work with an explicitly sexualized definition of lesbian existence that necessitates genital contact, but rather a concept of intimate, nurturing networks of female support. This allows her to recover the passionate friendships of the

nineteenth-century as lesbian history. Jeffreys, in *The Spinster and Her Enemies,* and Vicinus, in *Independent Women,* have both made valid criticisms concerning the drawing of too definitive a boundary between romantic friendships and genital sex, particularly in the light of the Victorians' overwhelmingly phallocentric perception of the sexual act which led Lord Justice-Clerk Hope to declare a sexually explicit act between two women as a "violent improbability" and a "crime so utterly abandoned, that it is totally unknown and even doubtful it can exist". See L. Faderman, *Scotch Verdict: Miss Pirie and Miss Woods versus Dame Cumming Gordon* (London: Quartet Books, 1983), p. 149. Feminist scholars have also noted the negative impact of sexological theories such as Havelock Ellis' theory of inversion, which classified anything other than heterosexuality as a sign of sexual deviancy in women, upon public tolerance of same-sex female friendships.

53. Vicinus, *Independent Women,* p. 17.

54. ibid, p. 18.

55. Mrs Havelock Ellis, *James Hinton: A Sketch* (London: Stanley Paul and Co., 1918), p. 109. Hinton became increasingly engrossed during the latter years of his life in speculative philosophical analyses of the social and moral depravity he saw around him.

56. ibid, p. 69.

57. Hopkins, cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 87.

58. Ellis, *James Hinton,* p. 104.

59. In conjunction with his proposed vision of sexual reform, Hinton advocated women and men enter into "a fine polygamy" (Ellis, *James Hinton,* p. 153), where sex would ultimately cease to degrade and begin instead to liberate the prostitute, by making useful wives out of dishonoured mistresses.

60. ibid, p. 102.

61. Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* p. 97.

62. Ellis, *James Hinton,* p. 27. Hopkins' editing of the *Life and Letters of James Hinton* (London: Kegan Paul and Co., 1878), led Hinton's wife Margaret to later remark that for fear of besmirching her own reputation, Hopkins had depicted him less as he really was and more as she wished he had been. Remark cited in Ellis, *James Hinton,* p. 27.

63. Cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 95.

64. Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 134.

65. Hopkins wrote frequently to friends of "writing in order to earn, chiefly to help her many charities", Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 126. No details are given concerning the amount of her father's allowance, only that it was "quite enough to keep her independent", ibid, p. 126. Frank and Mrs Crossley provided her with an initial £2000 to obtain secretarial assistance, ibid, p. 135. This was a similar amount to that which she left as a legacy to the White Cross League after her death. See Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood: or. Mothers and Sons. A Book for Parents* (London: Wells Gardner, Darton and Co., 1899), p. 184.

66. Frances Power Cobbe, *Essays on the Pursuit of the Churches* (London, 1863), p. 105, cited in Heeney, *The Women's Movement in the Church of England,* p. 21.

67. Hopkins does admit, however, to having been once "much thrown" with Arthur Tennyson, youngest brother of the Poet-Laureate, which whom she spent time with in her youth. "He was a strange, fascinating creature, absent-minded and shy to a degree", cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 69.

68. According to Patricia Hollis, the 1851 census revealed 405,000 more women than men in the population. By the late-Victorian period, almost one in three adult women were single, and one in four would never marry. Hollis, *Women in Public 1850-1900: documents of the Victorian women's movement* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1979), p. 36.

69. The "surplus" of unmarried women was the cause of considerable alarm amongst male commentators such as the oft-quoted W. R. Greg, who deplored the abnormal numbers of "redundant" women compelled to lead an "independent and incomplete existence in their own" instead of "completing, sweetening, and embellishing the existence of others as a most "unwholesome social state". See W. R. Greg, "Why are Women Redundant?", *National Review,* 15 (1862), pp. 434-60.

70. Education and employment were consequently key issues of early feminist agitation, seeking to expand the traditional and highly unappealing options for unmarried women of the governess, companion or seamstress. There are a large number of texts on feminist campaigns surrounding these issues, but for a helpful introduction, see Philippa Levine, *Victorian Feminism,* especially, pp. 26-56, and pp. 82-104.

71. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 145.

72. ibid, p. 145.

73. See J. S. Reed, "A Female Movement", p. 200 and p. 229. The feminist propensities of Anglo-Catholicism have been well documented by Reed who presents the movement as something of a radical option in mid-Victorian religious culture, attracting a particularly high representation of single women. The High Church restoration of sisterhoods and conventual institutions, and the establishment of practices such as auricular confession and segregation of the sexes for worship undercut the dominance of Victorian family ideology and its related normative female roles of wife and mother. John Shelton Reed's *Glorious Battle: The Cultural Politics of Victorian Anglo-Catholicism* (Vanderbilt University Press, April, 1997) was released too late for use in this thesis.

74. B. M. G. Reardon, *From Coleridge to Gore,* p. 433. See also Charles Gore's Bampton lectures, *The Incarnation of the Son of God* (1891), for another example of Anglo-Catholic incarnationalism.

75. According to *Lux Mundi* contributor Aubrey Moore, science provided an opportunity "for a recovery of the cosmical aspect of the Incarnation", cited in A. M. Ramsey, *From Gore to Temple. The Development of Anglican Theology between Lux Mundi and the Second World War 1889-1939* (London: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1960), p. 4.

76. Reardon, *From Coleridge to Gore,* p. 84.

77. Cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 211.

78. ibid, p. 229.

79. Ramsey, *From Gore to Temple,* p. 28.

80. Stephen Prickett, *Romanticism and Religion. the tradition of Coleridge and Wordsworth in the Victorian Church* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 56.

81. Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 54. Scholars have argued that from the mid-nineteenth century down to 1870 the tendency of Anglican Evangelicalism was to exhibit an increasing strictness and censoriousness towards the world. See especially Doreen Rosman, *Evangelicals and Culture* (London: Croom Helm, 1984) and Michael Hennell, "Evangelicalism and Worldliness 1770-1870", in G. J. Cuming and D. Baker (eds.), *Popular Belief and Practice. Studies in Church History, vol. 8,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), pp. 229-236.

82. Ellice Hopkins, *The Present Moral Crisis* (London: Hatchards, 1883), p. 18.

83. Cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 20.

84. ibid, p. 34.

85. ibid, p. 27.

86. ibid, p.35. Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection* (1825) was the classic Victorian exposition on faith and doubt, which addressed the intelligent doubter. Coleridgean thought was to influence generations of Victorian clerical-elite, and its author has rightly been described as "one of the Church of England's most brilliant sons", Reardon, *From Coleridge to Gore,* p. 63.

87. ibid, p. 27. See the direct parallels between Hopkins' quote and Coleridge's observation that "speculative difficulties, if no more than speculative, can be put aside, since religious truth is not discoverable by speculation merely as such", cited in Reardon, *Coleridge to Gore,* p. 65.

88. Cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 211.

89. ibid, p. 22

90. See Hopkins, *Is it Natural?* (London: Hatchards, n.d.), p. 11.

91. Cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 140.

92. See for example, James Bentley, *Ritualism and Politics in Victorian Britain: the attempt to legislate for Belief* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978).

93. Cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 29. The nature of the Church as an extension of the Incarnation within the world was a point of key controversy between Evangelicals and Anglo-Catholics, but not one that Hopkins' writings make reference to. Likewise her recommendation for membership of the Anglican Church was simple and pared to the absolute minimum - "So long as I could devoutly repeat the Apostles' Creed, I should think myself at liberty to become one of her lay members", ibid, p. 29.

94. ibid, p. 30. Hopkins speaks of the "holy and restful communions" of the Anglican church and notes approvingly the "higher place the Holy Communion occupies in the spiritual life of Christians in the Church of England than in any other denomination", ibid, p. 29.

95. ibid, p. 29.

96. ibid, p. 122. "If only you could realize the harm this flashy claptrap sort of advertisement does your work," she wrote to Dr. Barnardo in the following New Year, "how it injures the sacredness of it, and how unworthy it is of the unspeakable sadness and sorrow of it all", ibid, p. 123.

97. Hopkins' companion, Mrs McIsaac, wrote to Rosa Barrett, "She had a wonderful memory - a great

blessing in long fits of depression. Her greatest comfort was on such occasions was St. John's Gospel, which she could repeat from beginning to end. Often on visiting her room in the middle of the night I have found her repeating her favourite gospel", Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 197.

98. ibid, p. 29-30.

99. ibid, p. 32-33.

100. ibid, p. 201.

101. A. J. Mason, *Memoir of George Howard Wilkinson,* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., shorter edition, 1910), p. 240.

102. According to Mason, Wilkinson had begun life as an Evangelical and came under the influence of the "Catholic school" later. In his book *Holding the Fort,* John Kent who draws primarily, as I have done, upon Mason's Memoir, offers a highly critical presentation of Bishop Wilkinson as an ambitious priest full of "powerful self-regard" (p. 243), and somewhat over-anxious to encourage the psychological and emotional dependency of his parishioners upon him.

103. See Mason, *Memoir of George Howard Wilkinson,* p. 128.

104. ibid, p. 208.

105. See Sherwin Bailey's, "The White Cross League", *Moral Welfare* (April, 1952), p. 3, for an account of the Churchmen's Union and its significance for Hopkins' work with male chastity.

106. See David Bebbington, *Evangelicalism and Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Unwin Hyman Ltd., 1989), pp. 2-17.

107. Cited in Bebbington, *Evangelicalism and Modern Britain,* p. 12.

108. Cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 30.

109. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism and Modern Britain,* p. 16. See also John Kent's comment that "historians in general fail to relate Anglo-Catholicism and Anglican Evangelicalism to one another, after the brief encounters of the 1860s", Kent, *The Unacceptable Face,* p. 89.

110. K. Hylson-Smith, *High Churchmanship in the Church of England: From the Sixteenth Century to the late Twentieth Century* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), p. 207.

111. See Dieter Voll, *Catholic Evangelicalism* (London: Faith Press, 1963) and John Kent's discussion of this text in *Holding the Fort,* pp. 242-3.

112. W. S. F. Pickering, *Anglo-Catholicism: A Study in Religious Ambiguity* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 67.

113. G. W. E. Russell, *The Household of Faith, Portraits and Essays* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1902), p. 314 cited in Pickering, *Anglo-Catholicism,* p. 68. See Pickering, *Anglo-Catholicism,* pp. 65-87 for a useful discussion of the relationship between conversionism and mission in both denominations. See also Kent, *Holding the Fort.*

114. Hopkins, cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 18.

115. ibid, p. 19.

116. ibid, p. 19.

117. ibid, p. 22

118. Elihu Burritt, "Seed Lives" (n.d.), cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 14.

119. Kent, *Holding the Fort,* p. 87.

120. My discussion of the distinctive characteristics of Hopkins' oratory has drawn upon Olive Anderson's "Women Preachers in Mid-Victorian Britain", pp. 467-484. In the light of Kent's assessment of "The Failure of English Revivalism" in 1859-62, it is perhaps Anderson's correlation of mid-century revivalism and the new wave of women preachers that needs to be revised, and an alternative theory for the emergence of this group of women advanced. See Kent, *Holding the Fort,* pp. 71-131.

121. Cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 254.

122. ibid, p. 11

123. ibid, p. 11

124. Cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p.27. She wrote in a letter dated January, 1869 of being "cut...to the heart" by a friend's hilarity at the "racy" language and "strong, home-spun" expressions used in her writing, cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* pp. 26-7.

125. Cited in *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 36.

126. Henry Scott Holland, in his Introduction to Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. ix. Scott Holland was canon of St. Paul's at the time of writing this Introduction. He subsequently went onto become Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford between 1911 and 1918.

127. ibid, p. viii.

128. ibid, p. ix.

129. ibid, pp. ix-x.

130. Anderson, "Women Preachers in Mid-Victorian Britain", p. 476.

131. ibid, p. 472.

132. Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 253.

133. Hopkins, *Village Morality,* p. 13.

134. Cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 174.

135. ibid, p. 145.

136. ibid, p. 145.

137. ibid, p. 145.

138. Term used by Judith Walkowitz to describe the success of women's entry into the public domain during the 1880s, gaining public office and newly "commanding attention at demonstrations, street corners and meeting halls", Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight,* p. 65.

139. Cited in Eric Trudgill, *Madonnas and Magdalens. The origins and development of Victorian sexual attitudes* (London: Heinemann, 1976), p. 102.

140. Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* p. 94.

141. Cited in F. D. How, *William Dalrymple Maclagan, [Archbishop of York]* (London: Wells Gardner, Darton and Co.Ltd., 1911), p. 224.

142. ibid, p. 223.

143. Showalter, *Sexual Anarchy,* p. 24.

144. ibid, p. 23.

145. Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society,* p. 119. In his *Josephine Butler: A Life Sketch* (1887), William Stead wrote. "it was thought...that the woman who first had to plead for the inviolable sanctity of women's right to her person should herself be a matron with the experience and standing of a wife and mother", p. 31, cited in Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society,* p. 120.

146. ibid, p. 120.

147. Scott Holland, in Introduction to Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. vii.

148. ibid, p. 179.

149. ibid, p. 26.

150. Elaine Showalter, *The Female Malady: Women, Madness and English Culture, 1830-1980* (London: Virago Press, 1987), p. 134. See also Barbara Sichermann, "The Uses of a Diagnosis: Doctors, Patients and Neurasthenia", *Journal of the History of Medicine,* 32, 1 (1977), pp. 33-54. Lady Caroline Stirling's description of Hopkins as "a highly-educated and gifted woman, laid aside by some internal complaint and fretting at being helpless", in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 51 fits the popular description of the neurasthenic.

151. Cited in Lorna Duffin, "The Conspicuous Consumptive: Woman as an Invalid", in Sara Delamont and Lorna Duffin (eds.), *The Nineteenth-Century Woman: Her Cultural and Physical World* (London: Croom Helm, 1978), p. 37.

152. W. S. Playfair, *The Systematic Treatment of Nerve Prostration and Hysteria* (Philadelphia: Henry Lea, 1883), p. 89, cited in Showalter, *The Female Malady,* p. 140. Such was Hopkins' longing for good health that whilst on Brighton beach, she compares herself with a shell-crusted, storm-beaten old log and declares a "longing to put forth a few fresh leaves and blossoms", in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 26.

153. Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 27.

154. ibid, p. 144.

155. See her comments in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p.145.

156. ibid, p. 144.

157. See Ann Douglas Wood,"The Fashionable Diseases': Women's Complaints and Their Treatment in Nineteenth-Century America", in Hartmann and Banner (eds.), *Clio's Consciousness Raised,* pp. 1-22, and Duffin, "The Conspicuous Consumptive", pp. 26-56.

158. Duffin, "The Conspicuous Consumptive", p. 26.

159. Medical validation of the inferior status of women was illustrated by one of the most prevalent treatments for women with nervous disorders - S. Weir Mitchell's "rest-cure". This consisted of lengthy periods of complete immobility, rest, seclusion and confinement to bed with various tonics, stimulants and a heavy milk-based diet to counteract any likelihood of muscular atrophy. Many feminist historians have assessed Mitchell's "rest-cure" and related treatments as "needlessly controlling and intrusive" with a coercive misogynist intent on reducing women to infantile dependence upon their doctor. See for example, Ann Douglas Wood, "The Fashionable Diseases'", pp. 1-22, and Ellen L. Bassuk, "The Rest-Cure: Repetition or Resolution of Victorian Women's

Conflicts?", in Susan Rubin Suleiman (ed.) *The Female Body in Western Culture: Contemporary Perspectives* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: Harvard University Press, 1986), pp. 139-151. Barbara Sicherman on the other hand has suggested that "such a temporary yielding up of the will in childlike obedience to a charismatic physician may actually have been restorative for some women who were unable to accept their own emotions and dependences", Sicherman, "The Uses of a Diagnosis", p. 50.

160. Feminists have argued that it is possible to interpret sickness in terms of female rebellion as well as compliance with medical theories of inferiority. By becoming ill, women could temporarily escape the banalities and constraints of domestic existence, retire to a private space or avoid unwanted sexual demands. To an extent, therefore, illness could be a means to escape from the stresses of public life. Hopkins, for example, rested for two or three years prior to her national purity campaign.

161. Cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 26

162. Cited in Showalter, *The Female Malady,* p. 136.

163. Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *The Yellow Wallpaper* (1892) was written as a powerful polemic against S. Weir Mitchell's rest-cure which she was adminstered for three months, suffering from a serious mental breakdown as a result. See "Why I Wrote 'The Yellow Wallpaper'", in Ann J.Lane, (ed.), *The Charlotte Perkins Gilman Reader* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), p. 19-20. See also Florence Nightingale, *Cassandra* with an introduction by Myra Stark (1860, reprint New Haven, Connecticut: The Feminist Press, 1979).

164. Showalter, *The Female Malady,* p. 62. According to Nightingale's perceptive insight, passivity could turn all altruism into hatred. "The great reformers of the world turn into the great misanthropists, if circumstances do not permit them to act. Christ, if he had been a woman, might have been nothing but a great complainer", Nightingale, *Cassandra,* p. 53.

165. Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 26.

166. ibid, p. 230.

167. ibid, p. 119.

168. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 104.

169. See Nancy Boyd, *Josephine Butler, Octavia Hill, Florence Nightingale. Three Victorian Women who Changed their World* (London: Macmillan, 1982) for a discussion of this.

170. Scott Holland, in the introduction to Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. viii.

171. ibid, p. 252.

Chapter 4 - Social Purity and the Response of the Churches

1. Gareth Stedman Jones, *Outcast London: a Study in the Relationship between Classes in Victorian Society* (London: Penguin, 1976).

2. First established in the 1950s and 1960s by the work of E. R. Wickham, *Church and People in an Industrial City* (London, 1957), and K. S. Inglis, *Churches and the Working-Class in Victorian*

England (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), the irreligiosity of the working-class theory has undergone several historiographical revisions. One of the most recent and radical is Callum Brown's "Did Urbanisation Secularize Britain?", *Urban History Yearbook* (1988), pp. 1-14, in which it is argued that working-class participation in church life was much higher than previously estimated. See Hugh McLeod, *Religion and Irreligion in Victorian England* for an excellent overview of this ongoing debate.

3. Bebbington makes the point that this new social conscience was prompted not so much by the "increasing gravity of social problems", but by religious *awareness* of them, *The Nonconformist Conscience,* p. 38.

4. Andrew Mearns, *The Bitter Cry of Outcast London. An Inquiry into the Condition of the Abject Poor* (London, 1883, reprinted by Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., London, 1970), p. 4. Whilst Mearns was responsible for the field work and data for *The Bitter Cry,* the actual author was the Rev. William Carnall Preston (1837-1902), a Congregational minister from Wigan. Statistics given on non-attendance at worship by Mearns include Bow Common, where out of 2290 persons, only 88 adults and 47 children attended; Leicester Square, where out of 246 families only 12 attended and in a district of St-George's-in-the-East, only 39 persons out of 4235 attended worship, normally, as Mearns noted, for charitable distributions, *The Bitter Cry,* p. 5.

5. ibid, p. 3. In one street alone, Mearns noted, 32 out of 35 houses were brothels and in another area, 43 brothels housed 482 prostitutes, some no more than 12 years old.

6. ibid, p.10. Mearns laid little additional stress on the issue of incest, but Stead's publicization of *The Bitter Cry* as recently appointed editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* in October and November, 1883, sensationalized the most shocking details. See Bebbington, *The Nonconformist Conscience,* p. 43.

7. See Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities,* pp. 37-61 for a discussion of this.

8. ibid, p. 38.

9. ibid, pp. 18-22.

10. ibid, p. 39.

11. Cited in Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities,* pp. 38-9.

12. Bebbington, *The Nonconformist Conscience,* p. 42.

13. See for example, Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance;* Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities;* Bland, *Banishing the Beast* and Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight.*

14. Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight,* p. 81.

15. See Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight,* pp. 81-134 for a useful historiographical overview of the literature, and a full discussion of the cultural consequences of "The Maiden Tribute".

16. Bristow describes these articles as "prurient hash", *Vice and Vigilance,* p. 110.

17. ibid, p. 113 for this account. Bristow notes the use of white roses for purity, the banners proclaiming "Sir, Pity Us"; "Men, Protect the Girls of England"; "War on Vice"; "Shame, Shame Horror", the "wagonloads of young girls in white" and the 600 strong delegation from the LNA dressed in funereal black.

18. See Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities,* pp. 86-92 for the collapse of medical hegemonic discourse during

the 1880s.

19. See especially Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance.*

20. ibid, p. 128.

21. Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities,* p. 104.

22. Cited in Brian Harrison, "State Intervention and Moral Reform", in Patricia Hollis (ed.), *Pressure From Without in Early Victorian England* (London: Edward Arnold, 1974), p. 302.

23. ibid, pp. 289-318.

24. B.F.Westcott, *Christus Consummator* (3rd edn., London, 1890), pp. 120-121, cited in David M. Thompson, "The Christian Socialist Revival in Britain: A Reappraisal", in Jane Garnett and Colin Matthew (eds.), *Revival and Religion Since 1700. Essays for John Walsh* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1993), p. 285.

25. Hugh Price Hughes, *Philanthropy of God* (1892), p.51, cited in Richard J. Helmstadter, "The Nonconformist Conscience", in Parsons (ed.), *Religion in Victorian Britain,* p. 89.

26. Hugh Price Hughes, *Social Christianity* (London, 1890), p. 139 cited in Thompson, "The Christian Socialist Revival", p. 292.

27. In Liverpool, the crusade for purity became a vital issue in the local council elections when the Tory council, sympathetic to the trade of the local brewers, were ousted by a coalition of purity and liberal activists on a platform of temperance and anti-vice agitation, see Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* p. 170.

28. Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities,* p. 132. Brian Harrison has observed that it would be inaccurate to depict moral reform legislators as "pioneers of Victorian collectivism" for in their two-pronged attack of "prosecution and education", appeals to the state tended only to shore up existing principles of voluntary effort, "State Intervention and Moral Reform", p. 304.

29. Purity leaders such as Coote, Dyer and Hughes, along with Nonconformists Bunting, Stead and John Clifford also made themselves unpopular with the government by their activity in securing the political downfall of Sir Charles Dilke after Dilke's adulterous affair which ended his marriage in a highly publicized divorce case. Leading purity workers campaigned against his return to Parliament, threatening the Liberal Party with the loss of Nonconformist votes if Dilke were offered a place in government. Dilke was returned to office, but his career was permanently blighted. See Bebbington, *The Nonconformist Conscience,* p. 45.

30. Stead was a pioneer in his journalistic techniques of first-person interviews; cross-column headlines; colloquial idiomatic language, picturesque detail of poverty-stricken, labyrinthine London streets and public shock-value. See Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight,* pp. 84-5.

31. See Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 113.

32. Bebbington, *The Nonconformist Conscience,* p. 41.

33. ibid, p. 44 and Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* pp. 104-5.

34. Paul McHugh, *Prostitution and Victorian Social Reform,* p. 187.

35. Stead to Archbishop Benson, Archbishop Benson papers, vol. 6, item 354, Lambeth Palace Library.

36. Bishop Lightfoot to Percy Bunting, 7 September, 1885, in Percy Bunting Correspondence, cited in Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* p. 113.

37. See Archbishop Benson's Papers, vol. 6, items 352 ff., Lambeth Palace Library. Bebbington also notes that Charles Spurgeon wrote to Stead, and John Clifford visited him in prison, *The Nonconformist Conscience,* p. 44.

38. See Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 250 and p. 147.

39. ibid, p. 146.

40. ibid, p. 147. According to the Rev. Arthur Mason, chaplain to George Wilkinson in Truro, Hopkins bombarded the bishop with letters at this time, adjuring him "to ascribe to the fund raised in his [Stead's] defence, and to hold meetings for that purpose", Mason, *Memoir of George Howard Wilkinson,* p. 240. Hopkins dismissed her subpoena to appear in Stead's trial as a character witness, as "the most unnecessary piece of service my country has ever required of me", Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 252. Stead emerged after six months in Holloway as a hero of purity and justice and embarked on a 2000 mile tour to raise public awareness of the NVA.

41. Bebbington, *The Nonconformist Conscience,* pp. 37-60. See David Thompson's "The Christian Socialist Revival: A Reappraisal" for a revised perspective upon the interdenominationalism of the the late-Victorian revival of social concern among the churches.

42. See McHugh, *Prostitution and Victorian Social Reform,* p.195 and Bebbington, *The Nonconformist Conscience,* p. 39.

43. Moral Reform Union, *Third Annual Report* (October 31st 1883, to November 5th, 1884), p. 11.

44. Bebbington, *The Nonconformist Conscience,* p. 39.

45. See Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* p. 111.

46. See McHugh, *Prostitution and Victorian Social Reform,* p. 189 and B. H. Harrison and A. E. Dingle, "Cardinal Manning as Temperance Reformer", *Historical Journal,* 12 (1969), pp. 485-510.

47. Cited in McHugh, *Prostitution and Victorian Social Reform,* p. 190.

48. ibid, p. 190.

49. Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society,* p. 80.

50. McHugh, *Prostitution and Victorian Social Reform,* p. 188.

51. See Caine, *Victorian Feminists,* p. 165 for a reference to the effect of the Butler's moral reform interests upon the career of George Butler.

52. Hopkins, *My Little Sister* (London: Hatchards, n.d.), p. 8.

53. Hopkins, *Conquering and to Conquer, Vol. II* (London; Hatchards, 1886), p. 28.

54. Moral Reform Union, *Sixth Annual Report* (1886), p. 14.

55. ibid, p. 14.

56. ibid, p. 15.

57. Pusey in *The Shield* (5 April, 1873), p.111, cited in McHugh, *Prostitution and Victorian Social Reform,* p. 189. A striking feature of the Anglican hierarchy who eventually became involved in purity was their activity in many other aspects of social reform. Bristow cites Bishop How of Bedford, in the East End from 1879-1888; the Bishop of London, Mandell Creighton, founder of the

Public Morality Council and Bishop Winnington Ingram, Creighton's successor, who headed up the Oxford settlement, *Vice and Vigilance,* p. 102.

58. See, however, the more recent work of social historians such as John Tosh, "Domesticity and Manliness in the Victorian Middle Class" on Benson's zeal for purity and Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* pp. 76-77 and pp. 100-1. See also Bailey's comment -"It is strange that A. C. Benson's *The Life of Edward Benson,* nowhere refers to the Archbishop's valuable support of the purity movement, or to the founding of the C. E. P. S.", "The White Cross League", p. 3, n. 6.

59. See Tosh, "Domesticity and Manliness in the Victorian Middle Class", p. 46.

60. Cited in Tosh, "Domesticity and Manliness in the Victorian Middle Class", p. 48.

61. See Bailey, "The White Cross League", p. 3; Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* p. 105 and Jeffreys, *The Spinster and Her Enemies,* p. 11.

62. Cited in How, *William Dalrymple Maclagan,* p. 223.

63. See Archbishop Tait Papers, vols. 248-281 and Archbishop Benson Papers, vols. 6, 120 and 125, Lambeth Palace Library.

64. Hopkins to Archbishop Tait, (July 25th, 1879), Archbishop Tait Papers, vol. 248 ff. item 314, Lambeth Palace Library. Catherine Tait had previously attended a Ladies Association meeting in Croydon.

65. Hopkins to Mary Benson, (April 12th and 24th, 1885), Archbishop Benson Papers, vol.25, f. 352, Lambeth Palace Library.

66. See Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 89.

67. See Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities,* pp. 114-17.

68. Hopkins, *A Plea for the Wider Action of the Church of England in the Prevention of the Degradation of Women* (London: Hatchards, 1879), p. iv.

69. Hopkins, *The Apocalypse of Evil* (London: Hatchards, 1886), p. 18.

70. Hopkins, *A Plea,* p. 3.

71. Hopkins, *Touching Pitch,* (London, n.d.), p. 4.

72. Hopkins, *A Plea,* p. 5.

73. Hopkins, *The Present Moral Crisis,* p. 3.

74. ibid, p. 6. According to M.J.D. Roberts, "Making Victorian Morals? The Society for the Suppression of Vice and its Critics, 1802-1886", *Historical Studies,* vol. 21, no.83 (October, 1981), pp. 157-173, until the NVA, the Vice Society was the "only guardian of literary morality for nearly three generations", (p. 168). Between 1834 and 1880 they seized 385,000 obscene prints and photos; 80,000 books and pamphlets; 28,000 song-sheets and circulars. See Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* p. 49. The Vice Society made no attempt to become a national agency, however, and practised a far more temperate policy of prudence and discretion. It was swallowed up by the moral panic of the 1880s and merged formally with the NVA in 1886. Referring to the public furore raised by Stead, Hopkins commented, "I am no advocate of sensational narratives of vice, but...the solemn revelation of evil must form an occasional factor in the moral education of man". Rather than corrupting youth, as was argued by the prurient factions in the Church, she believed that such exposes had

"startled thousands of young men into realisation of the full heinousness of the sins of impurity", *The Apocalyse of Evil,* p. 12.

75. Hopkins, *The Standard of the White Cross. Do We Need It ? An appeal to laity and clergy* (London: Hatchards, 1885), p. 24.
76. Hopkins, *The Secret and Method of Purity. Expressly Addressed to Christian Workers* (London: Hatchards, 1886), p. 10.
77. Hopkins, *The Standard of the White Cross,* p. 16.
78. ibid, p. 12.
79. Hopkins, *The Vanguard* (June, 1886), p. 38.
80. ibid, p. 39.
81. Hopkins, *The Secret and Method of Purity,* p. 19.
82. Hopkins, *Village Morality,* p. 4.
83. Hopkins, *The Secret and Method of Purity,* pp. 10-11.
84. ibid, p. 11.
85. Hopkins, *Touching Pitch,* p. 5.
86. Hopkins, *Per Angusta ad Augusta* (London: Hatchards, 1883), p. 4.
87. Hopkins, *The Vanguard* (June, 1886), p. 38.
88. Hopkins, *Per Angusta ad Augusta,* p. 5.
89. The term "fleshly school" was probably a reference to the phrase used by Robert Buchanan in "The Fleshly School of Poetry", a celebrated attack in the *Contemporary Review* (October,1871), pp. 334-50 on the group of poets led by Rossetti, Morris and Swinburne, for their erotic leanings. According to Eric Trudgill the review was "prompted more by professional jealousy than moral indignation...in response to the critical adulation and the extensive sales Rossetti's collection had enjoyed" Trudgill, *Madonnas and Magdalens,* p. 235.
90. Hopkins, *Per Angusta ad Augusta,* p. 6.
91. ibid, p. 7.
92. ibid, p. 12.
93. ibid, p. 8.
94. Hopkins, *Man and Woman; or, the Christian Ideal* (London: Hatchards, 1883), p. 14.
95. ibid, p. 12.
96. Hopkins, *A Plea,* p. 13.
97. Hopkins, *Seeking and Saving: A Monthly Journal of Home Mission and Penitentiary Work,* vol. III (December, 1883), p. 10.
98. A theology of embodiment lies at the heart of contemporary feminist theology in its reclamation of the body, especially women's bodies which have for centuries of patriarchal Christian thought, been subject to denigration and control. See Carter Heyward, *Touching Our Strength: The Erotic as Power* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1989) and Sallie McFague, *The Body of God: An Ecological Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press; London: SCM Press, 1993).
99. Bailey, "The White Cross League", p. 3.

100. See Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance;* Jeffreys, *The Spinster and her Enemies* and Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities* for such references.

101. Because of its loose organizational structure, tendency to permeate existing societies, and overlap of personnel in temperance and other reform movements, no estimate has ever been made of the overall scale of the purity project. Bristow has argued, correctly in my opinon, that purity numbers compared unfavourably with temperance within the Anglican set-up. See Chapter 6 of my thesis for further discussion of this.

102. Virtually all workers before the mid-century were men - "In the 1840s it was virtually impossible to attract women to a movement whose focus was prostitution", Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* p. 49. Women like Sarah Robinson in Aldershot in the 1860s, Julia Wightman in Shrewsbury, Josephine Butler in Liverpool and Hopkins in Brighton broke down this taboo. By the end of the century most agreed with Arthur Brinckman, Chaplain of St Agnes' Hospital, that "women can, will, and must do the greater part of this work among women" *Notes on Rescue Work* (London, 1885), p. 81, cited in Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy,* p. 89. See Michael Mason's *The Making of Victorian Sexual Attitudes,* pp. 82-115 on the inability of secular magdalenist projects to flourish. The term "magdalenism" is defined by Mason as a "personally engaged attitude" towards the prostitute, which Evangelicals appeared "breezily indifferent" to, considering the Catholic associations with the term, p. 82, p. 90.

103. *Seeking and Saving: A Monthly Journal of Home Mission and Penitentiary Work,* vol. V (London: W. Skeffington and Son, January 1885-April 1890).

104. Figures cited in Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy,* p. 191. Evangelical rescue attempts are traced by Kathleen Heasman, *Evangelicals in Action,* pp. 148-168, the Salvation Army is dealt with by Ann R. Higginbotham, "Respectable Sinners: Salvation Army Rescue Work with Unmarried Mothers, 1884-1914", in Malmgreen, *Religion in the Lives of English Women,* pp. 216-33 and a brief mention of the Jewish Association is given in Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* pp. 178-180.

105. Hopkins, *Work in Brighton,* p. 3.

106. See Jane Lewis, "Women in late-nineteenth-century social work", in Smart (ed.), *Regulating Womanhood: Historical essays on Marriage, Motherhood and Sexuality,* pp. 78-99.

107. Hopkins, *Work in Brighton,* p. 23.

108. Lewis, "Women in late-nineteenth-century social work", p.79. See also Jane Lewis, *The Politics of Motherhood, Child and Maternal Welfare in England, 1900-1939* (London: Croom Helm, 1980).

109. The term "resocialization" is coined by Linda Mahood in her book, *The Magdalenes: Prostitution in the Nineteenth-Century,* to denote the imposition of middle-class ideals and practices of femininity upon working-class girls. See Chapter 5 of this thesis for a fuller examination of this notion.

110. Hopkins, *A Plea,* p. 17.

111. "Prudes on the Prowl", *The Daily Telegraph* (October and November, 1894). A cartoon of Ormiston Chant as "Mrs Prowlina Pry" also appeared in *Punch* (October 27, 1894), p. 194. See Ormiston Chant's *Why We Attacked the Empire* (London: Horace Marshall & Son, 1985), and her series "Amused London", I-IV, in *The Vigilance Record* (June-November, 1888).

112. Ormiston Chant, *A Merry Christmas (A Poem)* (Harrow: Miller's Library, 1911); *Sellcut's Manger (A Novel)* (London: Grant Richards, 1899) and *Verona and Other Poems* (London: David Stott, 1887).

113. Ormiston Chant, "The Real Religion of Today", in H. Barrows (ed.), *The World's Parliament of Religions,* vol. I, (Chicago, 1893) pp. 591-4. See also Laura Ormiston Chant, "Duty of God to Man Inquired" in Walter R. Houghton (ed.), *Neely's History of the Parliament of Religions and Religious Congresses at the World's Columbian Exposition,* compiled from Original Manuscripts and Stenographic Reports, 4th edition (Chicago: F. Tennyson Neely, 1894), pp. 250-52. My thanks to Ursula King for these references.

114. Caine, *Victorian Feminists,* p. 206.

115. Cited in Jackson, *The **Real** Facts of Life,* p. 63.

116. ibid, p. 80.

117. See for example, Josephine Butler, *An Address to Students at Cambridge* (London: Dyer Bros); Dr. E. Blackwell, *Purchase of Women* (London: John Kensit); Laura Ormiston Chant, *Chastity in Men and Women* (London: Dyer Bros.); Mrs Fawcett, *Theatre and Pantomime Children, No. 1* (London: NVA). For less well-known authors see Mrs Bayley, *An Old Mother's Letter to Young Women* (London: Shaw and Co.); Mrs Lance, *The Teacher's Responsibility in Creating and Sustaining a High Moral Standard in the Class* (London: Dyer Brothers); Mary Clifford, *Our Little Servant Girls, Addressed to Mistresses* (London: Hamilton, Adams and Co.); Maria Grey, *An Address to Women of all Classes* (London: NVA); Anna Lindsay, *Christian Women as Citizens* (London: National Society for Women's Suffrage). None of these pamphlets are dated, although all were in print by February 1888. Some purity writers used only their initials or a pseudonym, which makes it difficult to be any more precise about the gendered break-down of the literature, but sensible guesses can be made. See for example, S. I. F., *Private Letters from a Mother to a Mother* (London: SPA); H.N., *How to Protect Your Girls* (London: Bemrose and Sons) and Esperance, *A Woman's Faith* (London: D. Stott). All these titles were listed in the *List of Literature Recommended by the National Vigilance Association,* (London, February, 1888).

118. "By 1870, there was an identifiable and lucrative trade for the religious publishing houses in what was called 'mothers' meeting literature'", Frank Prochaska, "A Mother's Country: Mothers' Meetings and Family Welfare in Britain, 1850-1950", *History: The Journal of the Historical Association,* 74 (1989), p. 381.

119. Estelle Freedman, "Separatism as Strategy: Female Institution Building and American Feminism, 1870-1930", *Feminist Studies,* vol.5, no.3 (Autumn, 1979), p. 512. Freedman is arguing here that female institution building which emerged from middle-class culture was integral to feminist politics. She examines a wide range of women's clubs and organizations between 1870-1920 and suggests that the erosion of a strong female culture may well have been responsible, in part, for the deterioriation of American feminism from the 1920s onwards.

120. Political mobilization is defined by Marilley as "the process of activating formerly passive or excluded individuals so that they will participate for an extended period of time in a form of collective

action - usually a political organisation - that aims to create change", Suzanne Marilley, "Frances Willard and the Feminism of Fear", *Feminist Studies,* vol. 19, no.1 (Spring, 1993) p. 123.

121. Vicinus, *Independent Women,* p. 30.

122. Prochaska, "A Mother's Country" p. 381. According to Prochaska's history of the mothers' meeting which cites Ellen Ranyard as the first instigator in London in 1857, Hopkins would have been one of the earliest pioneers of this popular parish institution, having established several in Cambridge and Barnwell by 1860.

123. ibid, p. 382.

124. ibid, p. 382

125. Mary Ryan, "The Power of Women's Networks: A Case Study of Female Moral Reform in Antebellum America", *Feminist Studies,* vol. 5, no. 1 (Spring, 1979), p. 68.

126. See the listings of LACFGs in *Seeking and Saving,* (January, 1885 to April, 1890).

127. See Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* p. 98.

128. See Hopkins, *Ladies Associations for the Care of Friendless Girls, Being an Account of the Work in Brighton* (London: Hatchards, 1878), p. 3

129. "In 1876, Miss Ellice Hopkins, during her strenuous efforts to educate public opinion on questions of morals, began for purposes of preventive and rescue work, to found Ladies Associations for the Care of Friendless Girls. In 1889, a conference of the Yorkshire Association was held at Barnsley...and in 1895 the National Union was formally constituted", taken from 'The History of the National Union", *Handbook and Report of the NUWW* (1906), cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* pp. 110-1. See also the article by the Countess of Aberdeen in the *Review of Reviews,* (May 1891). According to *The Official Report of the NUWW Conference held at Manchester, 1896* (Manchester: J. E. Cornish, 1896), a formidable showing of 34 LACFG members were on the General Committee.

130. Cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 111.

131. See *NUWW Handbook and Report* (1909-10), pp.60-1 and *NUWW Occasional Paper* (September 1910), p. 37.

132. Hopkins to Scott Holland, Archbishop Benson papers, vol.6, item 375, Lambeth Palace Library, also the article by Hopkins in *Seeking and Saving* (Autumn, 1883), p. 160.

133. ibid, p. 160.

134. See Hopkins, *The Purity Movement. Cannot We Use Existing Organizations. A Practical Suggestion to clergy and lay workers* (London: Hatchards, 1885), p. 4 for the problems of mixed meetings and a comparison with the temperance movement.

135. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 3.

136. ibid, p. 5.

137. "While in hearty sympathy with much of the work of the Church of England Purity Society, we think the exclusion of women from its councils a fatal mistake. Nor do we consider that, as a rule, 'generally mixed meetings of the sexes could not have this topic brought into prominence'", Moral Reform Union, *Third Report,* (1883) p. 13.

138. Hopkins, Editorial, *Seeking and Saving,* vol. 3, no.30 (Autumn, 1883), p. 226.

139. ibid, p. 226.

140. See The NVA in 1886, Council Listing, NVA Collection, Fawcett Library.

141. See the *Manual of the White Cross League, Church of England Society* (London, n.d.), p. 12.

142. Hopkins to Scott Holland, Archbishop Benson Papers, vol.6, item 375, Lambeth Palace Library.

143. ibid.

144. ibid.

145. See for example, The White Cross League 24th *Annual Report* (1906-1907), which stated that "much of the evil which ruins the lives of our young people of both sexes is due to the ignorance and want of principle of the girls, and above all to the callousness of their mothers...Our work among boys is sadly hindered by this laxity among girls and women", p.8, cited in Bailey, "The White Cross League", p. 8.

146. Marilley, "Frances Willard and the Feminism of Fear", pp. 123-146.

147. Cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 87.

148. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 19 and p. 24.

149. ibid, p. 187.

150. Cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 221.

151. ibid, p. 221.

152. Hopkins, *Work in Brighton,* pp. 22-3.

153. Hopkins, *Grave Moral Questions addressed to the men and women of England* (London: Hatchards, 1882), p. 7.

154. Jeffreys, *The Spinster and Her Enemies,* p. 15.

155. Freedman, "Separatism as Strategy", p. 525.

156. See Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society,* pp. 235-245 for a full account of this episode.

157. ibid, p. 236. The success of Hopkins' rhetoric caused some resentment amongst the leadership of Butler's Ladies National Associations (LNAs), who were keen to point out that they had done much of the original groundwork for her positive reception. "The effect of our long-continued efforts to enlighten public opinion was evident in the preparation thus made for the favourable reception according to Ellice Hopkins' lectures in social purity. Without our previous work, hers would have had little effect", cited in Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society,* p. 133.

158. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 181. Walkowitz has argued that Hopkins "did not connect prostitution to larger feminist issues, particularly to the economic and political disabilities of women. However dependent her own career, she preached adherence to women's traditional role to others", *Prostitution and Victorian Society,* p. 238.

159. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 183.

160. Hopkins in *Opinions of Women on Women's Suffrage* (London, 1879), p. 56, cited in Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy,* p. 219.

161. See my "Suffragettes" in Lisa Isherwood and Dorothea McEwan (eds.), *An A to Z of Feminist Theology* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), pp. 222-4.

162. Fawcett, "Home and Politics: An Address delivered at Toynbee Hall and Elsewhere", Central and East of England Society for Women's Suffrage, (n.d.), p. 3, cited in Caine, *Victorian Feminists,* p. 221.

163. "Protectionist ideology complemented the suffragist and more egalitarian arguments by showing women how they could fashion meaningful forms of political participation without relinquishing their distinctive identities", Marilley, "Frances Willard", p. 129.

164. Freedman, "Separatism as Strategy", p. 513.

Chapter 5 - "The Power of Womanhood": Religion, Rescue Work and Female Sexuality.

1. Linda Mahood, *The Magdalenes: Prostitution in the Nineteenth Century,* p. 13. Mahood has argued that "once the socio-political and historical construction of the category 'prostitute' is recognized, a materialistic or empirical study of prostituion and 'prostitutes' is extremely problematic", p. 13. My chapter follows the theory that the term "prostitute" was a created category on the part of the moral reformer. As my discussion of the LACFG refuges makes clear, however, prostitution/rescue work was also a material reality and my discursive interpretations of the prostitute are grounded in this.

2. There are many excellent studies of nineteenth-century prostitution. My research has drawn mainly from the following: Mahood, *The Magdalenes;* Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society;* E. M. Sigsworth and T. J. Wyke, "A Study of Victorian Prostitution and Veneral Disease", in M. Vicinus (ed.) *Suffer and be Still: Women in the Victorian Age* (London: Methuen, 1972), pp. 77-99; Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy,* pp. 182-221; Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* pp. 154-174; Mason, *The Making of Victorian Sexual Attitudes,* pp. 82-115 and Mason, *The Making of Victorian Sexuality,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 72-103; F. Finnegan, *Poverty and Prostitution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); Bland, *Banishing the Beast,* pp. 95-123; I. Muirhead, "Churchmen and the Problems of Prostitution in Nineteenth-Century Scotland", *Records of the Scottish Church History Society,* vol.18 (1974), pp. 223-47 and Lynda Nead, *Myths of Sexuality: Representations of Women in Victorian Britain* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988).

3. Taken from Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* pp. 168-170.

4. See Thomas Laqueur, "Orgasm, Generation, and the Politics of Reproductive Biology", *Representations,* Part 14 (Spring, 1986), pp.1-41.

5. See Chapter 2 of this thesis for a fuller discussion of this. See also Nancy Cott's "Passionless: An Interpretation of Victorian Sexual Ideology, 1790-1850", *Signs,* vol. 4, no. 2 (1978), pp. 219-36.

6. W. Acton, *The Functions and Disorders of the Reproductive Organs,* (London: 1857) cited in Nead, *Myths of Sexuality,* p. 50.

7. Acton, *Functions and Disorders,* p. 184, cited in Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities,* p. 79.

8. Acton, *Functions and Disorders,* p. 114, cited in Nead, *Myths of Sexuality,* p. 19.

9. Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight,* p. 21.

10. "The Angel in the House" was the title of a collection of nuptial poems by the Catholic poet

Coventry Patmore on the relations between women and men in the sacaramental union of marriage. The phrase itself has since come to represent the Victorian ideal of womanhood, although it has become so overused by historians as to have lost its original critical perception. See Wendell S. Johnson, *Sex and Marriage in Victorian Poetry* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1975) pp. 74-79 for a discussion of Patmore's vision of marriage, and Carol Christ's "Victorian Masculinity and the Angel in the House" in M. Vicinus (ed.) *A Widening Sphere: The Changing Roles of Victorian Women* (London: Methuen and Co., 1977), pp. 146-162 for a useful consideration of Patmore's ambivalence towards male sexuality through the "angel" image.

11. See Nead, *Myths of Sexuality,* p. 110.
12. Cited in Nead, *Myths of Sexuality,* p. 110.
13. See Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Society,* pp. 41-7 and Jackson, *The **Real** Facts of Life,* pp. 71-4 for a discussion of Acton's sexual moralism.
14. Nead, *Myths of Sexuality,* pp. 129-30.
15. See Gill, *Women and the Church of England,* p. 78.
16. Hopkins, *The Secret and Method of Purity,* p.16.
17. ibid, p. 17.
18. See references to Mason, Bristow and Prochaska in note 2 above. See also Kathleen Heasman, *Evangelicals in Action,* pp. 148-68. My primary sources for this section include a wide range of unexplored pamphlets by Hopkins and the *Seeking and Saving* volumes already listed.
19. Hopkins, *A Plea,* p. 11.
20. See Hopkins, *Notes on Penitentiary Work,* (London, 1879) pp. 1-4. Highgate and Holloway CPAs were notorious for their use of flogging and solitary incarceration. See Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* pp. 158-9. Girls were given new names and disallowed from mentioning their past - "there are penitentiaries...existing in England where the inmates are actually deprived of their human names and numbered", wrote Hopkins in *Notes on Penitentiary Work,* p. 8. Whilst it was never the recipient of centralized ecclesiastical effort, rescue work remained an inherently religious undertaking. Prostitution proved a major emphasis of the mid-century domestic mission-field, with the spectacular boom in rescue societies fuelled by both High Church and evangelical energies. Anglo-Catholic initiatives, based on the Catholic model of the *Soeurs de la Charite,* were given fresh impetus during the 1850s by the renewal of Anglican orders for women. The first two to be established were Sisters of St. Mary the Virgin at Wantage and the Sisters of St. John the Baptist at Clewer in 1850. The new sisterhoods provided the staffing for many of the CPAs, co-ordinating the work of smaller rescue homes who affiliated themselves to this parent organization. The CPA burgeoned throughout its early years. After ten years it had 20 asylums linked with lay sisterhoods each admitting over 100 women a year. They established penitentiaries on a diocesan basis under the ministration of a Church chaplain, but were managed by devoted women. Despite their limitations, they have been rightly attributed as having "expressly put prostitute rescue in women's hands", Mason, *The Making of Victorian Sexual Attitudes,* p. 100.

21. Hopkins, *Notes on Penitentiary Work,* p. 3.

22. ibid, p. 4.

23. Hopkins, *The Visitation of Dens: An Appeal to the Women of England* (London: Hatchards, 1874), p. 13.

24. ibid, p.11. After reading of Sarah Robinson's successful experiences in Aldershot with this type of day-time visitation Hopkins records, "I was so forcibly impressed that this was the right agency for reaching outcast women, that I naturally became exceedingly anxious to try if it could be set on foot in Brighton", *The Visitation of Dens,* p. 11. See Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy,* p. 196 for an account of this. The Brighton scheme was actually started up by two clergy wives as Hopkins was ill, but she quickly joined them.

25. Hopkins, *The Visitation of Dens,* p. 19.

26. ibid, p. 18.

27. Hopkins, *The Secret and Method of Purity,* p. 13.

28. Hopkins, *The Visitation of Dens,* p. 9.

29. See Hopkins, *Ladies Associations for the Care of Friendless Girls,* p. 10. Hopkins' detestation of the brothel-keeper was such that she advised her members when confronted with the landlord or landlady "to pass them by as if there was no Saviour for them" See Hopkins, *The Visitation of Dens,* p. 19.

30. Hopkins, *Notes on Penitentiary Work,* p. 9. Michael Mason has observed that the shift to smaller, friendlier refuges was also a linguistic one, moving away from terms such as "penitentiary" and "asylum" to the vocabulary of "homes, cottages, mercy, missions and dormitories". See Mason, *The Making of Victorian Sexual Attitudes,* p. 94. The domestic, family-based model of rescue led Hopkins to query the suitability of the sisterhoods for such work. "Place the management of Cottage Homes in the hands of a sisterhood, and you endeavour to combine two opposed systems - the fundamental principle of a sisterhood being life in community, and that of the Cottage Home principle being family life. With all my admiration for them as nurses, I question the domestic character of Sisters", *Notes on Penitentiary Work,* p. 14.

31. ibid, p. 14.

32. ibid, p. 14.

33. Hopkins, *Notes on Penitentiary Work,* p. 13. "Home after Home I go to is so utterly wanting in this most essential element of brightness and beauty with which we so carefully surround ourselves in our own homes" wrote Hopkins in *Notes on Penitentiary Work,* p. 10. This theme also influenced her work with girls' recreative evening homes, where she suggested singing, music, skipping ropes and games for those wanting healthy leisure activities after a day's work in the factory. "As long as we are the 'dismal folk' I feel we lose the high-spirited ones and let the girls of the finest stuff escape - the very girls who would be ringleaders for Christ, if we did not associate His bright eucharistic religion with all that is dismal and dull". See Hopkins, in E. Hopkins, Caroline Paton and M. E. Hudson, *Recreative Evening Homes. How to Work Them* (London: Hatchards, 1887), p. 19.

34. See Hopkins, *Notes on Penitentiary Work* and *Ladies Associations for the Care of Friendless Girls* for these and more details on the weekly routines of the homes.

35. Mahood, *The Magdalenes,* p. 102. See also Carol Dyhouse, *Girls Growing Up in Late-Victorian and Edwardian England* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), pp. 105-13.

36. See Mahood, *The Magdalenes,* pp. 76-102.

37. Hopkins, *Ladies Associations for the Care of Friendless Girls,* p. 13.

38. Hopkins wrote in *How to Start Preventive Work; or, Hints on the Management of a Training Home and Free Registry Office on the Bristol Plan* (London: Hatchards, 1884) that her Ladies Associations "work up the rougher material into...other societies [the GFS and YWCA]", p. 13. See Dyhouse, *Girls Growing Up,* pp. 105-13 for the work of the GFS in raising the status of domestic service as a form of employment, and a revealing discussion of the attitudes of Mrs Townsend, founder of the Society in 1874, towards the inclusion of reclamation of prostitutes as part of the GFS programme.

39. See Mahood, *The Magdalenes,* p. 92.

40. Hopkins, *Notes on Penitentiary Work,* p. 15.

41. "Their bright melody takes the uneducated ear" she explained of the hymns in *Notes on Penitentiary Work,* p. 32. On the issue of religious education in the cottages she disagreed with Dr. Barnardo once again, feeling that in his homes, the absence of a regular place and time of worship deprived children of the knowledge of the Christian faith and Church prayers. Cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 120.

42. Hopkins, *The Visitation of Dens,* p. 13.

43. Elizabeth Blackwell, *Purchase of Women: The Great Economic Blunder* (London: John Kensit, 1887) no page number given, cited in Bland, *Banishing the Beast,* p. 16.

44. Hopkins, *Saved at Last!* (London: Hatchards, 1885), p. 7.

45. ibid, pp. 2-11.

46. Hopkins, *How to Start Preventive Work,* p. 13.

47. Mahood, *The Magdalenes,* p. 82.

48. Hopkins, *Notes on Penitentiary Work,* p. 7.

49. See Dyhouse, *Girls Growing Up,* p. 110.

50. Mason, *The Making of Victorian Sexual Attitudes,* p. 94.

51. ibid, p. 102.

52. "I perfectly agree with Mrs Butler that it is an evil herding these girls as a class together...any system of boarding-out would be preferable", See Hopkins, *Notes on Penitentiary Work,* pp. 8-9.

53. See Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* pp. 156-7 for the similar observation that the radical impulse of a Josephine Butler or an Ellice Hopkins "was largely submerged by the old system and...what Ellice had excoriated as an uninviting regime of 'bread, dripping and prayer'".

54. Hopkins, *Saved at Last,* p. 13.

55. See Nead, *Myths of Sexuality,* pp. 110-64.

56. Hopkins to Mrs Maclagan, in How, *William Dalrymple Maclagan,* p. 224.

57. See especially Hopkins, *The British Zulu* (London: Wells, Gardner, Darton & Co., 1891), pp. 8-

9 for a lurid description of childrens' bodies "covered with sores and...the scent of the grave" and a national conscience too contaminated and too palsied to respond.

58. Mason, *The Making of Victorian Sexual Atittudes,* p. 105.

59. Mahood, *The Magdalenes,* p. 56.

60. This genre was mythologized through literary fiction, poetry and art of the period. Thomas Hood's highly successful poem "The Bridge of Sighs" in which the body of a young prostitute was found washed up under Westminster Bridge, established suicide as an enormously popular and dominant cypher. See Nead, *Myths of Sexuality,* p. 169.

61. Hopkins, *The British Zulu,* p. 13.

62. William Acton was instrumental in generating a social environment predisposed to state regulated prostitution. As a venereologist he based his arguments for the CD Acts on the need to stem the rise in levels of sexually transmitted diseases. This was linked to a social analysis of the prostitute's life which justified male sexual recourse to the working-class woman by dispelling the image of the powerless victim of male lust and replacing public sympathy with a more realistic, rational assessment. His description of the "happy, healthy harlot" arose from a belief that prostitutes were of hardier constitution than the majority of women and generally in better health. Their careers on the street were normally brief and transitory, and often enabled the prostitute to re-enter respectable society considerably better off than her peers in dressmaking, factory sweatshops or the workhouse. See Nead, *The Myth of Sexuality,* pp. 147-8.

63. Hopkins, *The British Zulu,* p.7. According to Hopkins, Suicides' Bridge was a regular location for prostitutes who wished to end their moral and physical degradation. Mrs Steer's Bridge of Hope Mission, a refuge situated on London's infamous Ratcliff Highway and inspired by Hopkins' rescue methods, was located close to the bridge.

64. Hopkins comments, that "many go into it to support their poor fatherless babes...many more are driven to it from starvation and poverty", in *Touching Pitch,* p. 8. For the social reality, see Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society.*

65. ibid, p. 13.

66. Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy,* p. 134.

67. ibid, p. 133. As the CPA wrote in 1862, "the Mission of the Association is to rescue individual souls; and if, out of the number who annually leave the Penitentiaries, between two hundred and three hundred are permanently rescued, who can dare to say that little is done?" cited in M. Penelope Hall and Ismene V. Howes, *The Church in Social Work: A Study of Moral Welfare Work Undertaken by the Church of England* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965), p. 276, f/n 43.

68. Hopkins, *Lost in Quicksand* (London: n.d.), p.7.

69. Hopkins, *The Black Anchor* (London: Hatchards, n.d.), p. 12.

70. Hopkins, *The Ride of Death* (London: Hatchards, 1883), p.6.

71. Mahood, *The Magdalens,* p. 56.

72. See Patricia Kruppa, "'More Sweet and Liquid than any other': Victorian images of Mary Magdalene", in R. W. Davis and R. J. Helmstadter (eds.) *Religion and Irreligion in Victorian*

Society. Essays in Honor of R. K. Webb (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), pp. 117-32 for a discussion of the biblical and religious derivations of "magdalenism".

73. Hopkins, *Saved at Last !,* p. 5.
74. Hopkins, *The Defaced Image Restored* (London; Hatchards, n.d.), p. 26.
75. See Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight,* pp. 88-92.
76. ibid, p. 89.
77. See Nead, *Myths of Sexuality,* pp. 155-60.
78. Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight,* p. 89.
79. See especially Hopkins, *The Black Anchor,* pp. 12-13.
80. See Hopkins, *Saved at Last !,* pp. 10-11.
81. ibid, p. 3.
82. Hopkins, *The Secret and Method of Purity,* p.16. She also berates Church ministers' misinformed interpretations of the prostitute drawn from the history of Joseph (Genesis 39), and backed up with copious texts from Proverbs - "what has that mature, profligate wife in Proverbs, to do with our wretched, almost childish, outcasts?" she demands.
83. Hopkins, *The Defaced Image,* p. 13.
84. ibid, p. 14.
85. Hopkins, *The Ride of Death,* p. 4.
86. Hopkins, *Damaged Pearls. An Appeal to Working-Men* (London: Hatchards, 1884), p. 13.
87. ibid, p. 10.
88. Hopkins, *The British Zulu,* p. 6.
89. See Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society,* p. 113 for this.
90. Hopkins, *The Ride of Death,* p. 4.
91. Bland, *Banishing the Beast,* p. 304.
92. See Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 124.
93. See my discussion of social purity and feminism in Chapter 2 of this thesis.
94. Cited in Bland, *Banishing the Beast,* p. 100.
95. Josephine Butler to Mary Priestman, 5 November 1894, Josephine Butler Collection.
96. Cited in Bland, *Banishing the Beast,* p. 104.
97. Elizabeth Wolstenholme Elmy, *Journal of the Personal Rights Association* (May, 1886) cited in Bland, *Banishing the Beast,* p. 103.
98. Josephine Butler cited in Bland, *Banishing the Beast,* p. 99.
99. This theory was first enunciated by Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society,* and has since been taken up by many other historians.
100. Deborah Gorham, "The Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon", p. 367.
101. Cited in *The Journal of the Vigilance Association for the Defence of Personal Rights,* no. 5 (May 15, 1881), p. 51.
102. ibid, p. 51.
103. Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 145. In the mid 1850s, the Poor Law Board had certified a

growing number of industrial schools which meant that they were subject to government inspection and grants for expenses. Barrett records that "Chiefly through the efforts and representations of Ellice Hopkins, an Amendment to the Industrial Schools Act was passed in 1880, making it a criminal offence to keep any child under sixteen years of age in a house of ill fame, and giving power to remove children from this injurious custody, and to place them in Industrial Schools or other certified homes or schools", *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 113. The *Journal of the Vigilance Association for the Defence of Personal Rights* also attributed Hopkins with the enforcement of the ISA Act, although not in any complimentary sense of course. See also Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy,* p. 211.

104. Hopkins, *The Ride of Death,* p.26.

105. *The Journal of the Vigilance Association for the Defence of Personal Rights,* no. 11 (Nov. 15, 1881), p. 90.

106. ibid, p. 90. The articles in the JDPR concluded - "It is sad...to see a woman thus endorsing the common faith that "the centre of the evil" is in little girls", *The Journal for the Vigilance Association for the Defence of Personal Rights,* no.11 (Nov. 15, 1881), p. 90.

107. Hopkins, *Drawn Unto Death, a plea for the children coming under the Industrial Schools Act Amendment Act* (London: Hatchards, 1884), p. 12. In this pamphlet Hopkins argued that rather than diminishing parental responsibility, the Act actually enforced it. Parents were required to pay costs towards the child's keep in the industrial school which was an obvious deterrent from keeping a "disorderly house" or brothel. The Acts, she explained, were not worked by the police at all, but by a Rescue or School Board Officer.

108. Josephine Butler to Anon. (5 November, 1896), Josephine Butler Collection, Fawcett Library.

109. Hopkins, *Damaged Pearls,* p. 3.

110. ibid, p. 3.

111. ibid, p. 4.

112. Cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 119.

113. Bishop Westcott, cited in Richard J. Helmstadter, "The Nonconformist Conscience", in Parsons (ed.), *Religion in Victorian Britain,* p. 89.

114. According to David Thompson, T. H. Green, the "father of British idealism", provided a significant religious and philosophical basis for late-Victorian social reform. He was of particular, though not exclusive influence upon High Church Anglicans such as Henry Scott Holland. See Thompson, "The Christian Socialist Revival", pp. 289-291. See Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities,* p. 123 for a comparison of Green's philosophy with Hopkins' approach. Further research is required on this identification before any serious claims can be made, however.

115. Ormiston Chant, "Women and the Streets" in James Marchant (ed.) *Public Morals* (London: Morgan and Scott, 1902), p. 129.

116. Cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 44.

117. Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities,* p. 123.

118. ibid, p. 104.

119. See Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* pp. 140-43.

120. ibid, p. 142.

121. ibid, p. 141.

122. Hopkins, *England's Law for Women and Children* (London: Hatchards, 1883), p. 13.

123. ibid, p. 2.

124. ibid, p. 5.

125. ibid, p. 7.

126. Hopkins, *Homely Talk on the New Law for the Protection of Girls. Addressed to Fathers* (London; Hatchards, 1886), p. 26.

127. ibid, p. 12

128. ibid, p. 13.

129. ibid, p. 13.

130. "So vigilant and so severe are the laws that relate to crime against property, so remiss and often absolutely non-existent are the laws that protect the person, and especially the moral personality, that one is tempted to repeat the sarcasm that the soul of an Englishman first comes into him, not when the Lord God breathes into him the breath of life, but when the tailor stitches in his pockets", Hopkins, *England's Law for Women and Children,* p. 5.

131. ibid, p. 6.

132. ibid, p. 4.

133. Levine, *Victorian Feminism,* p. 57.

134. Bland, *Banishing the Beast,* pp. 111-115.

135. ibid, p. 112.

136. Hopkins, *England's Law for Women and Children,* p. 5.

137. See the introduction to Hopkins, *Village Morality.*

138. ibid, p. 4.

139. ibid, p. 5.

140. ibid, p. 5.

141. ibid, p. 5

142. Hopkins, *Work in Brighton,* p. 86.

143. See Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 57.

144. Gorham, "The Maiden Tribute Re-Examined", p. 365.

145. Jane Lewis, "Women and late-nineteenth-century social work", p. 79. See also the introduction in J. Lewis, *Women and Social Action in Victorian and Edwardian England* (Aldershot: Edward Elgar, 1991), pp. 1-16.

146. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 6.

147. Hopkins, *Per Angusta ad Augusta,* p.4. In *The Power of Womanhood* she wrote "I know as a fact...that behind our mature backs our girls are discussing these moral problems with quite an alarming amount of freedom", p. 142.

148. Hopkins, *The Secret and Method of Purity,* p. 16.

149. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 141.

150. See Jeffreys, *The Spinster and Her Enemies,* p. 29 for Wolstenholme Elmy's work, and Bland, *Banishing the Beast,* pp. 250-295 for a helpful discussion on sex education in her chapter "Speaking of Sex".

151. Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society,* p. 117.

152. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 69.

153. ibid, p. 69.

154. See Bristow's comment on this in *Vice and Vigilance,* p. 135.

155. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. vi.

156. ibid, p. 76.

157. ibid, p. 77.

158. ibid, p. 77.

159. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 83.

160. See also Gordon and Dubois, "Seeking Ecstasy on the Battle-field".

161. Hopkins, *On the Early Training,* pp. 26-31.

162. ibid, p. 48.

163. ibid, p. 48.

164. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 144.

165. ibid, p. 143.

166. See Chapter 1 of this thesis.

167. Mary Ryan, "The Power of Women's Networks", p. 67.

168. Hopkins, *Ladies Associations for the Care of Friendless Girls,* p. 7.

169. Hopkins, *The Present Moral Crisis,* p. 7.

170. Hopkins, *The Secret and Method of Purity,* p. 16-7.

171. Hopkins, *Ladies Associations for the Care of Friendless Girls,* p. 9.

172. Hopkins, *On the Early Training,* p. 16.

173. Hopkins, *Seeking and Saving* (Autumn, 1883), p. 228.

Chapter 6 - "True Knights of God": Social Purity and the Late-Victorian Ideal of Christian Manliness.

1. See the title of David Newsome's *Godliness and Good Learning.*

2. ibid, p. 17.

3. Norman Vance, *The Sinews of the Spirit,* p. 197. The term "muscular Christianity" was first coined by T. C. Saunders in the *Saturday Review* (February, 1857) to describe Kingsley's "strenuous paragon who feared God and could walk a thousand miles in a thousand hours, breathed God's free air on God's rich earth and at the same time could hit a woodcock, doctor a horse and twist a poker round

his finger", cited in James Mangan, "Social Darwinism and upper-class education in late Victorian and Edwardian England" in J. A. Mangan and James Walvin (eds.), *Manliness and Morality: Middle-Class Masculinity in Britain and America, 1800-1940* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), p. 137.

4. Vance, *The Sinews of the Spirit,* p. 181.

5. See for example, the range of women's history and feminist history texts cited in Chapters 1 and 2.

6. In the introduction to *Manful Assertions,* Michael Roper and John Tosh have commented on the problem of women's absence in accounts of nineteenth-century masculinity and the need to rectify this. Their proposed solution is not, as I am suggesting, an exploration of women writers on manliness, but the need to acknowledge the extent to which male commentaries on manhood were in themselves conditioned by their "experience of (and views about) women", p. 3. There is clearly room for both of these approaches in a fully integrated and relational gender history.

7. Hopkins was not the first woman to instigate a male purity league. The Social Purity Alliance established in 1873 is the earliest of this type of organization that I have been able to find. Bristow attributes Josephine Butler with its foundation, adding that by 1886, this "prototype" of a male purity league "had over 3,000 members in 40 centres". Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* p. 83. Paul McHugh on the other hand names Mrs W. T. Malleson, an active committee member of the National Association for the Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts, as the originator of the Social Purity Alliance. See McHugh, *Prostitution and Victorian Social Reform,* p. 72.

8. Hopkins, *A Plea,* p. 9. In July 1879, she wrote to Archbishop Tait, "Surely the church will not much longer confine her beneficent action to hammering away at a few poor degraded women, while leaving all the causes of this degradation untouched?", Archbishop Tait Papers, Vol. 248 ff. 314-317, Lambeth Palace Library.

9. Hopkins, *A Plea,* p. 14.

10. ibid, p. 14.

11. See Bailey, "The White Cross League", p. 3. I am indebted to Bailey's account for my discussion of the organizational structure of the WCA.

12. Montagu Butler, brother-in-law to Josephine, was late master of Trinity College, Cambridge and chairman of the CEPS. The contribution of the CSU leaders to social purity has been a neglected feature of existing accounts of their work. See the CEPS journal, *The Vanguard* and the White Cross Collection at the Church of England Record Centre, Bermondsey for relevant primary source material. See also Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* pp. 99-104.

13. Cited in Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* p. 101. See CEPS Council Minutes (12 June, 1891, 24. Nov. 1893), White Cross Collection, Church of England Record Centre, Bermondsey.

14. Hopkins, *The Standard of the White Cross,* p. 31.

15. No comprehensive biography of Lightfoot exists. See G. R. Eden and F. C. Macdonald (eds.) *Lightfoot of Durham. Memoirs and Appreciations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1932); (Anon.) *Bishop Lightfoot,* preface by B. F. Westcott, (London: MacMillan, 1894) and D. M. Thompson, "Lightfoot as Victorian Churchman", The Lightfoot Centenary Lectures, JDG Dunn,

(ed.) *Durham University Journal,* extra no., (1992), pp. 3-21.

16. Cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 159.
17. ibid, p. 161.
18. ibid, p. 161.
19. ibid, p. 164. See also Bailey, "The White Cross League", p. 4.
20. The White Cross obligations are cited throughout many of Hopkins' pamphlets. See *Rolling Away the Stone* (London: Hatchards, n.d.), p. 13 and *Damaged Pearls,* p. 3.
21. See Bailey, "The White Cross League", p. 5 and Hopkins' own account in *Damaged Pearls,* p. 3.
22. ibid, p. 5.
23. Hopkins, *Ten Reasons Why I Should Join the White Cross Movement* (London: Hatchards, 1885), p. 12.
24. Hopkins, *Damaged Pearls,* p. 3.
25. ibid, p. 2.
26. ibid, p. 30.
27. Hopkins, *The Purity Movement,* p. 17.
28. ibid, p.17. According to Donald Lewis, "The flexibility of interdenominational societies and their vision of a pan-evangelical Christian unity apparently had a stronger appeal to women than men", in W. J. Sheils and D. Wood (eds.) *Women in the Church: Studies in Church History, vol.27* (Blackwell: Oxford, 1990), p. 426.
29. See Bristow's account of this in *Vice and Vigilance,* p. 101.
30. Figures cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 181.
31. Hopkins, *The Purity Movement,* p. 17.
32. ibid, p. 13.
33. ibid, p. 14.
34. See Appendix II.
35. Cited in Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* p. 95.
36. Scott Holland, Introduction to Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. viii.
37. Cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 183.
38. ibid, p.183. Wherever a sympathetic bishop was to be found, such as at Durham, Newcastle or Bath and Wells, diocesan branches were established in conjunction with the CEPS. Municipal branches of the WCS such as those established in Gloucester, Birmingham, Manchester, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Leeds allowed for more interdenominational committees. University associations for purity were established at Cambridge, Oxford, Edinburgh and Dublin.
39. Hopkins, *The Purity Movement,* p. 9.
40. Both Lightfoot and Hopkins encouraged the YMCA to develop the WCA with limited success. A successful mass meeting at Glasgow led to 830 men pledging support for purity. See Hopkins, *The Purity Movement,* p. 9 for the Glasgow figures on this. Bristow notes, however, that "while the YMCAs of Scotland, Germany and America officially promoted the WC, the English central office backed off from a formal tie", *Vice and Vigilance,* p. 136.

41. Hopkins, *The Purity Movement,* p. 19.

42. Hopkins, *The Standard of the White Cross,* p. 13.

43. ibid, p. 13. There was also a good deal of useful co-operation between purity and temperance campaigns. Many clergymen, such as Bishop Fraser and George Butler, promoted these issues together as twin dimensions of a sensual indulgence. See Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* p. 102.

44. Estimates vary. Bristow argues that 1890s saw the peak of WCS activity with 19 diocesan branches and 120 directly affiliated parochial associations made up of "1,150 central subscribers, mostly clergy and churchmen of means", *Vice and Vigilance,* p. 137. Compare this with the Church of England Temperance Society with 34 diocesan branches, and a membership in the hundreds of thousands.

45. See Bailey for the most detailed account of the merger, "The White Cross League", pp. 6-7.

46. Bailey, "The White Cross League", p. 6. A rather different perspective on the prospect of a merger between the two societies is given by William Coote, in an editorial in *The Vigilance Record* of June 1890. Coote saw "ecclesiastical differences" as an "insuperable objection" to a successful merger without some compromise of principle by either the CEPS or the WCS. "The former, indeed, does not refuse membership to Nonconformists, but the latter not only has a very large Nonconformist membership, but is undenominational in its constitution, being governed by a board consisting of both Churchmen and Nonconformists", p. 52.

47. Hopkins, *The Vanguard,* (September 1889), p. 59.

48. See Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* pp.183-4 for the figures of Hopkins' sales. The first annual report of the White Cross Society recorded sales of over 700,000 copies in the first 3 years, see Bailey, "The White Cross League", p. 5. In his article on social purity in Wilhelmine Germany, John Fout refers to the League of the White Cross, founded in 1890 and directed at German youth. By 1910, there were 311 WC local organizations with in Germany with 4,476 members. See Fout, "Sexual Politics in Wilhelmine Germany", pp. 259-92.

49. Hopkins, cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 213.

50. Acton, *Functions and Disorders,* p. 74, cited in Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities,* p. 77.

51. Jackson, *The **Real** Facts of Life,* p. 74.

52. See Jackson, *The **Real** Facts of Life,* pp. 1-5 and pp. 60-1 for a useful discussion of this feminist strategy.

53. Hopkins, *Is it Natural ?,* pp. 6-7.

54. Hopkins, *True Manliness* (London: Hatchards, 1883), p. 5.

55. See Hopkins, *Touching Pitch,* p.7. This was a common ploy used by feminists. See Josephine Butler's use of Dante's *Inferno* in Nancy Boyd, *Josephine Butler, Octavia Hill, Florence Nightingale: Three Women who Changed Their World* (London: Macmillan, 1982), p. 89 and Laura Ormiston Chant's description of the music-hall - "It was as though we had seen with Dante the vision of...the unhallowed victims of their own lusts, swept round and round in never-ending circles by the storming gusts of their unchained passion", cited in Bland, *Banishing the Beast,* p. 106.

56. Figures cited in Lesley Hall, "Forbidden by God, Despised by Men: Masturbation, Medical

Warnings, Moral Panic, and Manhood in Great Britain, 1850-1950" in John Fout, *Forbidden History,* p. 299.

57. Hopkins, *True Manliness,* p. 5.

58. ibid, p. 7.

59. ibid, p. 5.

60. ibid, p. 5.

61. Hopkins, *Is it Natural ?,* p. 7.

62. ibid, p. 11.

63. ibid, p. 11.

64. Thomas Hughes, *Tom Brown at Oxford* (London, 1889), p. 207.

65. See Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities,* pp. 109-112.

66. Chadwick, *The Victorian Church, vol. II* pp. 1-35 for a discussion of the church's conflict and gradual acceptance of Darwinian theories. In Frederick Temple's 1884 Bampton lectures on "The Relations between Religion and Science", evolutionism was axiomatic to his discussion. According to Heyck, natural selection witnessed the operation of "chance, brutality, suffering and extinction" and destroyed the reverent, sacred attitude towards the world proffered by natural theology. Natural selection was the preservation of favourable variations and the rejection of unfavourable variants for survival. The Darwinian order was thus inherently opportunistic and individualistic. See Heyck, *The Transformation of Intellectual Life in Victorian Britain,* pp. 81-88.

67. Showalter, *Female Malady,* p. 122. See also R. J. Halliday, "Social Darwinism: A Definition", *Victorian Studies,* vol. XIV, no.IV (June 1971), pp. 389-405.

68. Bland, *Banishing the Beast,* pp. 84-5.

69. ibid, p. 86.

70. ibid, p. 86. "A moral being is one who is capable of reflecting on his past actions and their motives...[A]fter some temporary desire or passion has mastered his social instincts, he reflects and compares...and...resolves to act differently for the future - and this is conscience", Darwin, *The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex* (London: John Murray, 1871 ed.), p. 933 cited in Bland, *Banishing the Beast,* p. 87. Michael Ruse has argued that with respect to human morality "Darwin, for once, slightly lost his nerve about the way in which natural selection can act". After all, how would helping one's neighbours benefit individual survival ? To what extent would the qualities of loyalty, bravery and nobility aid natural selection? Darwin argues that morality may have had its origins in natural selection as "each man would learn from experience that if he aided his fellow-men, he would commonly receive aid in return", Ruse, "Social Darwinism: The Two Sources", *Albion,* vol.12, part 1 (Spring, 1980), pp. 30-1.

71. See Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities,* pp. 109-112.

72. Hopkins, *Per Angusta ad Augusta,* p. 13.

73. *The Testimony of Medical Men* (London: White Cross Series, n.d.), p. 6.

74. Bland, *Banishing the Beast,* p. 83.

75. ibid, p. 82.

76. Hopkins, *Per Angusta ad Augusta,* p. 12.

77. ibid, p. 26. See also *The Testimony of Medical Men,* which stated that "it is equally true that through heredity, self-restraint may become natural to the children of those who have kept their bodies in subjection", p. 7.

78. See Bruce Haley, *The Healthy Body and Victorian Culture* (London, England and Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1978).

79. Mason, *The Making of Victorian Sexual Attitudes,* p. 186.

80. See Peter Cominos, "Late-Victorian Sexual Respectability and the Social System", *International Review of Social History,* 8 (1963), pp. 18-48 and pp. 216-50 for a discussion of the cultural dominance of "respectable sexual ideology" during the 1880s and 1890s.

81. Hall, "Forbidden by God, Despised by Men", p. 298.

82. See Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society,* pp. 141-59.

83. Cominos, "Late-Victorian Sexual Respectability", p. 39.

84. Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities,* p. 115.

85. Hopkins, *True Manliness,* p. 4.

86. ibid, p. 4.

87. Fout, "Sexual Politics in Wilhelmine Germany", p. 292.

88. ibid, p. 292.

89. ibid, p. 292.

90. James Paget, cited in *The Testimony of Medical Men,* p.17. See Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* pp. 125-36 for a useful critical discussion of this aspect of the social purity campaigns.

91. See Bailey, "The White Cross League", p. 6 and Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* p. 100. In 1884, Edward Thring, head of Uppingham School, was invited by the Church Congress to give an address on "The Best Means of Raising the Standard of Public Morality". Thring had carried out a thorough inquisition on the levels of self-abuse at Uppingham between 1879 and 1883.

92. E. Lyttleton, *Causes and Prevention of Immorality in Schools* (London, 1883).

93. Hopkins, *Purity: A Confirmation Paper* (London: Hatchards, n.d.), p. 26.

94. ibid, p. 26.

95. See especially Hall, "Forbidden by God, Despised by Men" and Fout , "Sexual Politics in Wilhelmine Germany".

96. Hall, "Forbidden by God, Despised by Men", p. 297.

97. ibid, p. 304.

98. Cominos, "Late-Victorian Sexual Respectability", p. 223.

99. Hopkins, *Is it Natural ?,* p. 13.

100. Cominos, "Late-Victorian Sexual Respectability", p. 231.

101. Hopkins, *Purity: A Confirmation Paper,* p. 16.

102. Cominos, "Late-Victorian Sexual Respectability", p. 27.

103. See Fout, "Sexual Politics in Wilhelmine Germany" for a discussion of the nationalistic

underpinnings of adolescent purity.

104. Hopkins, *Damaged Pearls,* p. 11.

105. Hopkins, *Wild Oats , or Acorns ?* (London; Hatchards, n.d.), p.13.

106. ibid, p. 13

107. ibid, p. 12.

108. ibid, p. 9.

109. ibid, p. 13. Hopkins' remedies for sexual temptation were seemingly endless."I have known even so slight a thing as chewing a chip of quassia, or some momentary self-inflicted pain, dispel it, the pungent bitter of the passing twinge being sufficient to change the current of feeling", Hopkins, *Wild Oats,* p. 14. "Whistle a tune, jump up and shake yourself, repeat your multiplication table, almost anything will do that instantly changes the current of your thoughts", Hopkins, *True Manliness,* p. 19.

110. Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* p. 127.

111. See especially the writings of Henry Varley and Alfred Dyer, self-appointed chastity lecturers in the early 1880s in Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* pp. 131-2.

112. Hopkins, *Wild Oats,* p. 12.

113. ibid, p. 7.

114. Hopkins, *The Vanguard* (June, 1886), p.39.

115. See Mark Girouard, *The Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), p. 143. See also Girouard, *The Return to Camelot,* pp. 16, p. 182, p. 193, pp. 198-99 and pp. 250-1 for links between medievalism and Christian socialism.

116. Vance, *The Sinews of the Spirit,* pp. 17-26 for a discussion of "Chivalry and the Gentleman" in the nineteenth-century.

117. See Vance, *The Sinews of the Spirit,* pp. 29-41 for Kingsley's grudge against Catholicism and its impact upon his construction of masculinity.

118. Hughes, cited in Newsome, *Godliness and Good Learning,* p. 214.

119. Dean of Gloucester, "An Address at Trinity College, Cambridge", *CEPS Papers for Men* (London: n.d.), p. 20.

120. Hopkins, *The Ride of Death,* p. 3. No doubt Hopkins' own family background provided her with a predilection for such medievalising tendencies through her close association at Farringford with the coterie of poets, artists and writers such as the Tennyson family, the Camerons, George Watts and others who formed a celebrated inner circle of Victorian medievalist projects.

121. Hopkins, *The Ride of Death,* p. 13.

122. Vance, *The Sinews of the Spirit,* p. 20.

123. Girouard, *The Return to Camelot,* p. 198.

124. See William E. Buckler, *Man and His Myths: Tennyson's "Idylls of the King" in Critical Context* (New York: New York University Press, 1984), for a useful discussion of Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* and in particular the figure of Sir Galahad who spoke this line.

125. O. Anderson, "The Growth of Christian Militarism in mid-Victorian Britain", *English Historical Review,* 86 (1971), p. 58.

126. See Chapter 3 of this thesis. Hopkin's army-related pamphlets included *Active Service* (London, 1872) and *Does it Answer ? A Word for Soldiers,* (London, 1872).

127. See John Springhall, "Building character in the British boy: the attempt to extend Christian manliness to working-class adolescents, 1880 to 1914", in Mangan and Walvin (eds.), *Manliness and Morality,* pp. 52-74 and Springhall, *Youth, Empire and Society, British Youth Movements, 1883-1940* (London: Croom Helm, 1977).

128. Anderson, "The Growth of Christian Militarism", p. 66.

129. Hopkins, cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 157.

130. See Anderson, "Growth of Christian Militarism", p. 66 for a discussion of the para-militarism of these organisations which all arose in rapid succession between 1883 and 1887.

131. Hopkins, *Touching Pitch,* p. 12.

132. Anderson, "The Growth of Christian Militarism", p. 47.

133. Girouard, *Return to Camelot,* p. 229. See also D. G. Johnson, "The Death of Gordon. A Victorian Myth", *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History,* vol. 10 (1982), pp. 285-310.

134. Hopkins, *Moral Money-Clippers,* (London: Hatchards, n.d.), p. 9.

135. ibid, p. 9.

136. ibid, p. 4.

137. Hopkins, *The National Flag,* (London: Wells Darton, Gardner & Co., n.d.), p. 19.

138. ibid, p. 16.

139. Hopkins, *The British Zulu,* p. 5 and p. 12.

140. Hopkins, *Conquering and to Conquer,* vol. II, p. 7.

141. ibid, p. 9.

142. ibid, p. 13.

143. James Walvin, "Symbols of Moral Superiority: slavery, sport and the changing world order 1800-1950", in Mangan and Walvin (eds.), *Manliness and Morality,* p. 243.

144. See Chapter 4 of this thesis on the use of this term in the journalism of William Stead.

145. Hopkins, *Conquering and to Conquer,* vol. II, p. 4. Abolitionist terminology was not a particularly dominant mode of discourse for Hopkins, however.

146. Hopkins, *My Little Sister* (London: Hatchards, n.d.), pp. 7-8.

147. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 69.

148. ibid, p. 70.

149. John Tosh, "Domesticity and Manliness in the Victorian Middle Class", p. 65.

150. ibid, p. 65.

151. Hopkins, *Man and Woman; or, the Christian Ideal,* p. 13.

152. Hopkins, *Little Kindnesses* (London: Hatchards, 1885), p. 8. Hopkins' own relationship with her father was of significance here, as she followed this advice with the comment, "Every atom of

good in me, every scrap of good I have done in the world, I owe to my father - a father who was never too busy or too absorbed to listen...in every difficulty". According to Hopkins, the neglect of the responsibilities of fatherhood "forms the deepest violation of the moral being", *Is it Natural ?,* p. 11.

153. Hopkins, *Man and Woman; or, the Christian Ideal,* p. 8.

154. ibid, p. 9.

155. ibid, pp. 19-20.

156. See Vance, *The Sinews of the Spirit;* Mangan and Walvin (eds.) *Manliness and Morality;* Newsome, *Godliness and Good Learning;* Roper and Tosh (eds.), *Manful Assertions.*

157. Hopkins, cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 22.

158. C. H. Spurgeon, *A Good Start: a book for young men and women* (1898), p. 16, cited in Vance, *The Sinews of the Spirit,* p. 26.

159. Hopkins, *My Little Sister,* p. 4.

160. Hopkins, *The Man with the Drawn Sword* (London: Wells Gardner, Darton and Co., 1896), p. 8.

161. ibid, p. 5.

162. ibid, p. 5.

163. ibid, p. 5.

164. Hopkins, *My Little Sister,* p. 5.

165. Hopkins, *The Man with the Drawn Sword,* pp. 7-8.

166. Mangan and Walvin (eds.), Introduction to *Manliness and Morality,* p. 3.

167. ibid, p. 4. According to Vance, "neither Kingsley nor Hughes...welcomed the institutionalising of games which made such a serious business of pleasure", *The Sinews of the Spirit,* p.191. Hughes certainly did not approve of a manliness defined exclusively in terms of physical brawn. "Athleticism is a good thing if kept in its place, but it has come to be very much over-praised and over-valued amongst us", Hughes, *The Manliness of Christ* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1867, sixpenny edition, 1907), p. 12. In terms of an explanation for the shift from godliness to manliness, Vance has argued that "The entertaining and healthy activism of the manly hero...was bound to jar with the vivid religious imperatives: patience and heroic martyrdom, self-abnegation and the discipline of the will. The secular hero is captain of his fate and master of his soul, confidently dominating the action...sooner or later the Christian hero must acknowledge Christ as captain and master", *The Sinews of the Spirit,* p. 7.

168. Vance, *The Sinews of the Spirit,* p. 189.

169. Vance has argued that muscular Christianity was too much a product of the personalities of Kingsley and Hughes, and too much of a reaction too specific mid-century religious positions "which had been abandoned or greatly modified half a century later" to endure. *The Sinews of the Spirit,* p. 167. As my chapter indicates, I do not accept Vance's analysis regarding the inevitability of the secularization of manliness.

170. Hopkins, *Man and Woman; or, the Christian Ideal,* p. 22. See also James Mangan, *Athleticism in*

the Victorian and Edwardian Public School: the Emergence and Consolidation of an Educational Ideology and John Springhall, *Youth, Empire and Society: British Youth Movements, 1883 to 1940* for an investigation of the contribution of the manly, well-disciplined body as an instrument of colonial progress.

171. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 108. See J. A. Mangan, "Social Darwinism and upper-class education in late Victorian and Edwardian England", pp. 135-59 for a portrayal of the atheistic austerity of the public school system.

172. Hopkins, *The Defaced Image Restored,* p. 15.

173. Tosh, "Domesticity and Manliness in the Victorian Middle-Class", p. 65.

174. ibid, p. 67. See also Springhall, "Building character in the British boy", pp. 63-65.

175. "...manhood fused with female grace
In such a sort, the child would twine
A trustful hand, unasked in thine,
And find his comfort in thy face", Tennyson, *In Memoriam* CIX 17-20.
According to Marion Shaw, Tennyson's male figures frequently display effeminate vulnerability, vacillation and weakness. In the poem *In Memoriam* (Tennyson's tribute to Arthur Hallam), the mourner's response is "frequently likened to that of female grievers...his bereft state to that of an abandoned or unrequited woman" , Marion Shaw, *Alfred Lord Tennyson* (New York and London, Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1988), pp. 79-83.

176. ibid, p. 83.

177. See Vance, *The Sinews of the Spirit,* p. 146.

178. Hughes, *The Manliness of Christ,* p. 15.

Chapter 7 - A Sacrament of Passion: Marriage and Sexual Relations in the later work of Ellice Hopkins.

1. See A. James Hammerton, *Cruelty and Companionship: Conflict in Nineteenth-Century Married Life* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 159-60 for a discussion of the press debate organized by the *Daily Telegraph.*

2. *The Vanguard* (August, 1889), p. 50.

3. Gill, *Women and the Church of England,* p. 90.

4. Kent, *The Unacceptable Face,* p. 128. Owenite Socialism argued that marriage was essentially about the relations between men and women, not an institution imposed externally by a series of binding legal and ecclesiastical contracts. They subsequently advocated voluntary sexual liaisons. Such policies were condemned outright by the Church as blasphemous and immoral and the dynamics of this dispute reached hysterical proportions at times. See Taylor, *Eve and the New Jerusalem.* Gill has portrayed Owenite views on marriage in stark contrast to an Anglican theology "that still appealed to Genesis as a warrant for the belief in women's innate inferiority to men, and in her subjection as a justifiable consequence of the Fall", *Women and the Church of England,* p. 92. Ultimately Owenite Socialism, too advanced for its time, failed to make a mark on any legal

reshaping of policies on marriage. Prior to 1857, the responsibility for divorce rested entirely in the hands of the ecclesiastical courts who recognized few grounds for marital breakdown. The private petition required for a separate Act of Parliament was prohibitively expensive. Keith Thomas has estimated that only two hundred such petitions were ever granted. See Thomas, "The Double Standard", *Journal of the History of Ideas,* XX (1959) 2, pp. 195-216.

5. "The future question of marriage is not to be settled by laws of expediency, but...can only be safely resolved by a study of its history, as it was set forth first in the ancient writings of the Jews, afterwards commented on...by our Lord, and finally interpreted by the action and authority of the Church all through the Christian centuries", Herbert Luckock, Dean of Lichfield, *The History of Marriage* (London: Wells Gardner, Darton and Co., 1894), p. xvii.

6. Clerical positions ranged from outright condemnation of divorce and citation of the primacy of the Pauline prohibition, to Bishop Mandell Creighton's exhortation on the need to discern between innocent and guilty parties and adopt an appropriately charitable response to the former, a position that may well have had beneficial consequences for women. That Creighton's stance was unacceptably liberal for many churchmen is confirmed by Dean Luckock, who does not hold with the notion of remarriage for the innocent party which he believes would "operate fatally on the whole", *The History of Marriage,* p. viii. See the report in *The Vanguard* (September 1888) pp. 66-7 for a summary of the episcopal declarations on marriage and divorce. In virtual absence of any contemporary literature on the relationship between the Victorian church and divorce, Gill provides an useful summary of the debates in *Women and the Church of England,* pp. 90-8.

7. See especially Mary Shanley, "'One Must Ride Behind': Married Women's Rights and the Divorce Act of 1857", *Victorian Studies,* XXV (1982), 3, pp.355-76; Mary Lyndon Shanley, *Feminism, Marriage and the Law in Victorian England, 1850-1895* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1989); Lee Holcombe, *Wives and Property: Reform of the Married Women's Property Law in Nineteenth Century England* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1983); Philippa Levine, *Victorian Feminism 1850-1900 ;* I. Minor, "Working-Class Women and Matrimonial Law Reform, 1890-1914" in D. Rubinstein and D. Martin (eds.) *Ideology and the Labour Movement* (London: Croom Helm, 1979), pp. 103-24 and Philippa Levine, "'So Few Prizes and So Many Blanks': Marriage and Feminism in Later Nineteenth Century England", *Journal of British Studies,* vol.28, no.2 (1989), pp. 150-74.

8. Levine, *Victorian Feminism 1850-1900,* p. 130.

9. Between 1871 and 1911 the rate of adult females who were or had been married never fell below 60%. When younger unmarried women are excluded from the statistics, the figure becomes even higher with the percentage of women at 45 years old who were or had been married remaining above 85%. See Lewis, *Women in England, 1870-1950: Sexual Divisions and Social Change* (Sussex: Wheatsheaf Books, 1984), p. 3.

10. For useful discussions on coverture, see Lewis, *Women in England,* pp.119-21 and Hammerton, *Cruelty and Companionship,* p. 6.

11. The Divorce Commissioners' use of the term "aggravated enormity" included the necessity to prove

adultery plus bigamy, bestiality, sodomy, cruelty, or desertion for a minimum of two years in the case of men. Although the Act contained a clause that granted rights to a deserted wife for a protection order over her own earnings and offered in theory the option of divorce to women, in practice it was extremely restricted. Women were required to sue for divorce at their own expense, yet were of course unable to touch their own money. Consequently, only wealthy women were able to take advantage of full divorces, whereas working-class women utilized the cheaper but more restricted option of a separation order, hence denying themselves the opportunity of re-marriage. See Gail L. Savage, "The Operation of the 1857 Divorce Act, 1860-1910. A Research Note", *Journal of Social History,* 16 (Summer 1983), 4, pp. 103-110.

12. See Lewis, *Women in England,* pp. 119-24.
13. Hammerton, *Cruelty and Companionship,* p. 73.
14. See Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes,* pp. 180-5 and Hammerton, *Cruelty and Companionship,* pp. 75-8.
15. Hammerton, *Cruelty and Companionship,* p. 26.
16. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 145.
17. ibid, p. 147.
18. ibid, p. 144.
19. See Hopkins' "Litany on the Life and Death of Christ", taken from *Christ the Consoler,* verse 15, p. 80:

    Christ! who with Thy first work didst grace,
    And with Thyself, Thy rite divine
    Of marriage, hallowing love with Thine;
    Me at Thy marriage banquet place,
    The water of affliction here
    Turning to time of gladness there.

20. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 148.
21. ibid, p. 147.
22. See Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities,* pp. 153-209.
23. *The Vanguard* (Autumn, 1888), p. 67.
24. Hopkins, *The National Flag,* p. 17.
25. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 148.
26. Gill, *Women and the Church of England,* p. 94.
27. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 150.
28. ibid, p. 151.
29. ibid, p. 150.
30. ibid, p. 150.
31. Cited in Bland, *Banishing the Beast,* p. 173.
32. ibid, pp. 133-4 and pp. 138-9.
33. Lewis, *Women in England,* p. 75. See also J. A. and O. Banks, *Feminism and Family Planning in Victorian England* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1965), pp. 71-84.

34. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 154.

35. ibid, p. 48.

36. W. E. H. Lecky, *The History of European Morals,* 10th edition, vol. 2, (1892), p. 283 cited in Banks, *Feminism and Family Planning,* p. 114. As Trudgill has rather fancifully expressed the impact of the asexual wife - "many a husband who began in worship at the shrine of angelic purity was forced to become in time a votary of sin", *Madonnas and Magdalens,* p. 123.

37. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 27.

38. ibid, p. 27.

39. See Jane Lewis' introduction to Hamilton, *Marriage as a Trade,* pp. 1-15.

40. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 48.

41. Banks, *Feminism and Family Planning,* p. 75.

42. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 153.

43. ibid, p. 185.

44. ibid, p. 153.

45. ibid, p. 153. As an article in the *North British Review* (December, 1867) had observed: "[Men] will not marry, but they do not lead a life of celibacy;...they provide themselves with the physical indulgences of love at what they consider a cheaper rate and as for the sentiment and affection of love, they value those too little to be willing to pay the necessary price. They can afford themselves a mistress, but not a wife", cited in Banks, *Feminism and Family Planning,* p. 114.

46. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 152.

47. ibid, p. 152.

48. See Jeffreys, *The Spinster and Her Enemies,* pp. 86-101.

49. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 145.

50. Showalter, *Sexual Anarchy,* p. 45.

51. ibid, p. 45.

52. C. P. Gilman, *Woman and Economics* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1966, 1st edition 1898). According to Jane Lewis, Gilman was the only feminist theorist of the time to advocate childcare, in Hamilton, *Marriage as a Trade,* p. 5.

53. Mrs Hume-Rothery, *A Letter Addressed to the Right Honourable W. E. Gladstone M. P.* (Manchester, 1870), pp. 16-7, cited in Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities,* p. 94.

54. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 185.

55. ibid, p.153.

56. ibid, p.154.

57. James T. Johnson, "The Covenant Idea and the Puritan View of Marriage", *Journal of the History of Ideas,* vol. 32, 2 (1971) pp.107-118. Hopkins draws upon the work of Richard Baxter and Jeremy Taylor most prominently in her book, *Christ the Consoler.* Taylor was not strictly a Puritan, but was very similar to Puritan casuists. See Chapter 8 for further discussion of this text.

58. Johnson, "The Covenant Idea", p. 109. From this Johnson observes, "For the Puritans the primacy

of mutual help in marriage is tied to their campaign of marriage as based on an essentially covenantal model, with an emphasis on the mutual agreement of man and wife to live together as meethelps. The High Church position on the other hand, with marriage conceived on a chiefly biological model, has no place for a covenantal conception of marriage because of the simplicity of achievement of its primary end, procreation" , p. 109.

59. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 155.

60. ibid, p. 154.

61. Hammerton, *Cruelty and Companionship,* p. 2. See also Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977).

62. ibid, p. 2.

63. See Hammerton, *Cruelty and Companionship,* pp. 134-63 for a discussion of "The Adaptation of Patriarchy in Late-Victorian Marriage".

64. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 156.

65. ibid, p. 157.

66. ibid, p. 158.

67. ibid, p. 157.

68. According to Bland, the term "new woman" was first coined by the novelist Sarah Grand in 1894, *Banishing the Beast,* p. 144. There is a substantial amount of literature written on "new woman" fiction. See for example, Gail Cunningham, *The New Woman and the Victorian Novel* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1978); Showalter, *Sexual Anarchy* ; and Juliet Gardiner (ed.) *Women's Voices 1880-1918: The New Woman* (London: Collins and Brown, 1993). Mona Caird was a journalist, radical liberal feminist as well as an animal rights activist. She wrote several articles on marriage during the 1880s and 1890s. See especially *The Morality of Marriage* (London: G. Redway, 1897) and "Marriage", *Westminster Review,* vol. 130 (August, 1888), pp. 186-201. See Hamilton, *Cruelty and Companionship,* pp. 159-63 for Caird. Olive Schreiner became a celebrity on the publication of her novel, *The Story of an African Farm* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1883). See Showalter, *Sexual Anarchy,* p. 48.

69. Linda Dowling, "The Decadent and the New Woman in the 1890s", *Nineteenth Century Fiction,* vol. 33 (1979), pp. 438.

70. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* pp. 93-4.

71. Showalter, *Sexual Anarchy,* p. 38.

72. See Bland, *Banishing the Beast,* p. 144-5 for this distinction. See Dowling, "The Decadent and the New Woman in the 1890s", pp. 434-53 for a detailed examination of the conflation between decadence and the "new woman".

73. See Hammerton, *Cruelty and Companionship,* pp. 159-63. There were many "new women" who expressed highly controversial attitudes towards social and religious conventions of marriage. In Amy Levy's "A Ballad of Religion and Marriage", for example, the novelist foresees a parallel decline in the concepts of marriage and spiritual faith:

Monogamous, still at our post,
Recently we undergo
Domestic round of boiled and roast,
Yet deem the whole proceeding slow,

Daily the secret murmurs grow;
We are no more content to plod
Along the beaten paths - and so
Marriage must go the way of God.

It is not difficult to imagine Hopkins' response to such a sentiment! Poem cited in Showalter, *Sexual Anarchy,* p. 26.

74. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 150. The full quotation by Caird is also cited in Banks, *Feminism and Family Planning,* p. 100.

75. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 150.

76. ibid, p. 148.

77. ibid, p. 149.

78. ibid, p. 151.

79. ibid, p. 145.

80. ibid, p. 144.

81. ibid, p. 146.

82. ibid, p. 144.

83. See Lewis, *Women in England,* p. 91 for a discussion of this. See also Jane Lewis in Hamilton, *Marriage as a Trade,* for Cicely Hamilton's opinion that "women must choose between marriage (and motherhood) and work. There is no question of the two being sucessfully combined", p. 5.

84. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 156.

85. ibid, p. 156.

86. ibid, p. 155.

87. ibid, p. 159.

88. ibid, p. 15.

89. Lewis, *Women in England,* p. 125.

90. Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities,* p. 80.

91. According to Jean-Louis Flandrin for example, marriage during the medieval period was viewed as "a kind of preventive medicine given by God to save man from immorality", a necessary antidote to sexual temptation, in P. Aries and A. Bejin (eds.) *Western Sexuality: Practice and Precept in the Past and Present Times* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985), p. 115. E. Fuchs argues that the patristic exaltation of virginity had as its unavoidable corollary a fundamental devaluation of human sexuality. Whilst celibacy most closely approximated the divine angelic state, sexual, carnal desire was representative of humanity's fallenness, hence the constant reiteration in patristic texts of the spiritual dangers of physical relations between women and men which serve only to anchor the partners to their carnal bodies and the temporal concerns of this world. See also Fuchs, *Sexual Desire*

and Love: Origins and History of the Christian Ethic of Sexuality and Marriage, trans. Marsha Daigle, (New York: Seabury, 1983) for a helpful overview.

92. See Maynard, *Victorian Discourses on Sexuality and Religion* , pp. 85-140 for an incisive exposition of the interrelatedness of religious and sexual discourse within the writings of Charles Kingsley.

93. See Jean H. Hagstrum, *Sex and Sensibility: Ideal and Erotic Love from Milton to Mozart* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1980).

94. Hopkins, *The Secret and Method of Purity,* p. 12.

95. Hopkins, *Man and Woman; or, the Christian Ideal,* p. 11.

96. Hopkins, *The Secret and Method of Purity,* p. 11.

97. Hopkins, *Damaged Pearls,* p. 25

98. See Edmund Leites, "The Duty to Desire: Love, Friendship, and Sexuality in Some Puritan Theories of Marriage", *Journal of Social History,* vol. 15 (1981-2), pp.383-407.

99. According to Leites, "the Puritans called for an integration of ethics and impulse, constancy and spontaneity", in Leites, "The Duty to Desire", p. 396.

100. Hopkins, *Man and Woman; or, the Christian Ideal,* p. 12.

101. Hopkins, *The National Flag,* p. 19.

102. Hopkins, *True Manliness,* p. 7.

103. Hopkins, *Christ the Consoler,* p. 120.

104. Blackwell, *The Human Element in Sex: being a medical enquiry into the relation of sexual physiology to Christian morality* (London: J. and A. Churchill, 1884), cited in Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities,* p. 116.

105. Hopkins, *The Secret and Method of Purity,* p. 27.

106. Hamilton, *Marriage as a Trade,* p. 144.

107. Wolstenholme Elmy, cited in Jeffreys, *The Spinster and Her Enemies,* p. 30.

108. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 120. See Lewis, *Women in England,* pp. 24 ff. for the low-health of working-mothers. See also Margaret Llewellyn Davies, (ed.) *Maternity: Letters from Working Women* (London: Virago, 1978, reprint, 1st ed. 1915).

109. Cited in Jackson, *The **Real** Facts of Life,* p. 72. Acton went on to comment on the number of married men who had come to him complaining that "since the rights of women have been so much insisted upon they had suffered at the hands of women who regarded themselves 'as martyrs when called upon to fulfil the duties of wives'", cited in Jackson, *The **Real** Facts of Life,* p. 72.

110. Wolstenholme Elmy, cited in Jeffreys, *The Spinster and Her Enemies,* p. 34.

111. Hopkins, *The National Flag,* p. 15.

112. From the 1870s forwards a steady decrease in the birthrate occurred - from 295 legitimate live births per 1000 married women between 15 and 44, to 222 by 1901. Illegitimate birth rates also declined from 15.1 per 1000 in 1871, to 8.2 in 1901. Figures cited in Lewis, *Women in England,* p. 15. The decline in family size and marital fertility was perceived as being linked with an awareness of family planning, although there are differing theories as to who controlled birth control and fertility rates.

Patricia Branca in *Silent Sisterhood* has argued that it was women's heightened control over their own lives as a result of increasing resort to doctors and medical men. J. A. Banks in *Victorian Values: Secularism and the Size of Families* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981) on the other hand, has argued that it was a series of male initiatives by professional men concerned about the costs of childbearing.

113. See Linda Gordon *Woman's Body, Woman's Right* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977) and Angus McLaren, *Birth-Control in Nineteenth-Century England* (London: Croom Helm, 1978).

114. F. W. Newman, *The Corruption Now Called Neo-Malthusianism* (Moral Reform Union, 1889), p. 6. The Malthusian League was established by Charles Bradlaugh in the late 1860s in order to promote birth-control literature and a healthier, smaller population. See Banks, *Feminism and Family Planning,* p. 6 and pp. 90-4. The trial of Charles Bradlaugh and Annie Besant for the publication of their book *The Fruits of Philosophy* (1877) was a major publicisation of artificial birth control methods. The immense hostility to the book meant that Besant lost custody of her daughter on the double charge of atheism and Malthusianism. Sales of book escalated, however, and Besant was always keen to point out that she had received messages of "passionate gratitude" expressed by "letters from thousands of poor married women - many from the wives of country clergymen and curates - thanking and blessing me for showing them how to escape from the veritable hell in which they lived". Besant, cited in Banks, *Feminism and Family Planning,* p. 91. See also Mason, *The Making of Victorian Sexual Attitudes,* pp. 167-213 on Malthusianism.

115. Banks, *Feminism and Family Planning,* p. 97.

116. ibid, p. 98. See Lambeth Conference statement of 1908 - "The Conference regards with alarm the growing practice of the artificial restriction of the family, and earnestly calls upon all Christian peoples to discountenance the use of all artificial means of restriction as demoralising to character and hostile to national welfare" cited in Banks, *Feminism and Family Planning,* p. 99.

117. ibid, p. 99.

118. Cited in Banks, *Feminism and Family Planning,* p. 99.

119. Hopkins, *Man and Woman; or, the Christian Ideal,* p. 14.

120. Cited in Jeffreys, *The Spinster and Her Enemies,* p. 31.

121. See Jeffreys, *The Spinster and Her Enemies,* pp. 27-53 for a discussion of sexual continence theorists.

122. Frances Swiney, *The Bar of Isis; or, the Law of the Mother* (1907), pp. 48-51, cited in Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities,* p. 139. See Ruse, "Social Darwinism", for a helpful analysis of Spencer's theory of evolutionary processes.

123. See Jeffreys, *The Spinster and Her Enemies,* p. 32, Jackson, *The **Real** Facts of Life,* p. 82 and Bland, *Banishing the Beast,* p. 143 for the subtle nuances and complexities of this term.

124. F. Swiney, *The Mystery of the Circle and the Cross: or the Interpretation of Sex* (1908), p. 64, cited in Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities,* p. 140.

125. Wolstenholme Elmy in Jeffreys, *The Spinster and Her Enemies,* p. 32.

126. Sibthorp in *Shafts* (January, 1898), p.10, cited in Jeffreys, *The Spinster and Her Enemies,* p. 40.

127. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 142.

128. DuBois and Gordon,"Seeking Ecstasy on the Battlefield", p. 13.

129. Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight,* p. 7.

130. Bland, *Banishing the Beast,* p. 132. See Bland, *Banishing the Beast,* pp. 3-47 and Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight,* pp. 135-70 for the Men and Women's Club.

131. Cited in Bland, *Banishing the Beast,* p. 132.

132. Mason, *The Making of Victorian Sexuality,* p. 199 and pp. 195-205 for a helpful discussion of the medical and popular literature of the nineteenth century that focused on the eroticism of marriage via a belief in the doctrine of the reproductive orgasm.

133. ibid, p. 199.

134. See Mason, *The Making of Victorian Sexual Attitudes* for this argument, especially pp. 117-66.

Chapter 8 - "The Divine Mother": Christ and the Gender Debate.

1. Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, "Two Steps Forward, One Step back: New Questions and Old Models in the Religious History of American Women", *Journal of the American Academy of Religion,* vol. 53 (September, 1985), p. 467.

2. ibid, p. 467.

3. ibid, p. 469.

4. I have taken my definition of the term theology from an amalgamation of ideas suggested by Ursula King in her *Women and Spirituality: Voices of Protest and Promise* (London: Macmillan Press, 2nd edition, 1993), p. 156.

5. Crawford, *Women and Religion in England 1500-1720,* p. 3.

6. Thomas Carlyle, cited in Vance, *The Sinews of the Spirit,* p. 4.

7. ibid, pp. 52-9.

8. ibid, p. 6.

9. See for example B. M. G. Reardon, *From Coleridge to Gore;* A. M. Ramsey, *From Gore to Temple* and Kenneth Hylson-Smith, *High Churchmanship in the Church of England,* for helpful discussions of the impact of incarnational theology in late-Victorian Britain.

10. Charles Gore (ed.) *Lux Mundi* (London, 1889), p. 360, cited in Hyslon-Smith, *High Churchmanship in the Church of England,* p. 187.

11. ibid, p. 187.

12. See Chapter 6 of this thesis for this christological imagery.

13. Rev. S. S. Pugh, *Christian Manliness* (1867), p.127 cited in Vance, *The Sinews of the Spirit,* p. 146.

14. Hughes, *The Manliness of Christ,* pp. 10 and 19.

15. See Chapter 6 of this thesis for the reference for this citation.

16. Hopkins cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 149.

17. Scott Holland in the introduction to Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. vii.

18. Hopkins, *Christ the Consoler,* p. 70.
19. See Chapter 3 of this thesis for a fuller discussion of these themes.
20. See Caroline Walker Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion* (New York: Zone Books, 1991), pp. 53-78 for a useful clarification of the varying typologies of mysticism.
21. Showalter, *Female Malady,* p. 140.
22. Cited in Showalter, *Female Malady,* p. 134.
23. Hopkins, *Christ the Consoler,* p. vii.
24. Harvey Carlisle in the introduction to Hopkins, *Christ the Consoler,* p. xi.
25. ibid, p. 91.
26. ibid, p. 62.
27. ibid, p. 67.
28. Hopkins cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 205.
29. Hopkins, *Christ the Consoler,* p. 95.
30. Hopkins, cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 185.
31. ibid, p. 151.
32. Charlotte Yonge, *Womankind* (London, 1876) cited in Heeney, *The Women's Movement in the Church of England,* p. 12.
33. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 88.
34. ibid, p. 88.
35. Hopkins, "A Year's Progress" in *Seeking and Saving* (Autumn 1883), p. 163.
36. Hopkins, *The Visitation of Dens,* p. 28.
37. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 158.
38. Taylor, *Eve and the New Jerusalem,* p. 161.
39. ibid, pp. 161-71. See also Alex Owen, *The Darkened Room: Women, Power and Spiritualism in Late Victorian England* (London: Virago Press, 1989), pp. 12-17.
40. Taylor, *Eve and the New Jerusalem* p. 164.
41. ibid, pp. 163-4.
42. See Chapter 7 of this thesis for Swiney, and see Owen, *The Darkened Room* for a discussion of women spiritualists.
43. Vicinus, *Independent Women,* p. 277.
44. See Antony Harrison, "Christina Rossetti and the Sage Discourse of Feminist High Anglicanism" in Thais E. Morgan (ed.), *Victorian Sages and Cultural Discourse: Renegotiating Gender and Power* (New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press, 1990), pp. 92-3.
45. See Mary Poovey, "A Housewifely Woman: The Social Construction of Florence Nightingale" in Poovey, *Uneven Developments: The Ideological Work of Gender in Mid-Victorian England* (London: Virago, 1989), pp. 164-198.
46. Florence Nightingale, *Cassandra,* p. 50.
47. ibid, p. 52.

48. Hopkins, cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 98.

49. Nightingale, *Cassandra,* p. 50.

50. John Davies, *Florence Nightingale, or the Heroine of the East etc., etc., etc. A Poem* (London: Arthur Hall, Virtue, 1856), p. 8 cited in Poovey, *Uneven Developments,* p. 239, n. 9.

51. Cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 7.

52. Sarah Lewis, cited in Hammerton, *Cruelty and Companionship,* p. 57.

53. Trudgill, *Madonnas and Magdalens,* p. 78.

54. Heeney, *The Women's Movement in the Church of England,* p.14.

55. Cited in Heeney, *The Women's Movement in the Church of England,* p. 14.

56. Anna Davin, "Imperialism and Motherhood", *History Workshop Journal*, 5 (Spring, 1978), p. 10.

57. ibid, p. 10.

58. See Davin, "Imperialism and Motherhood", pp. 24-30.

59. See Eileen Janes Yeo, "Social Motherhood and the Sexual Communion of Labour in British Social Science, 1850-1950", *Women's History Review,* vol. 1, no.1 (1992), p. 75.

60. ibid, pp. 75-7.

61. ibid, p. 75.

62. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 152.

63. Yeo, "Social Motherhood", p. 76.

64. Hopkins, *Saved at Last !,* p. 2.

65. See Trudgill, *Madonnas and Magdalens,* pp. 78-90 for a discussion of the "angel-mother". See also Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight,* p. 89 for a description of Josephine Butler as the avenging mother.

66. Hopkins, *Saved at Last !,* p. 6.

67. Hopkins, *Man and Woman or, the Christian Ideal,* p. 5.

68. Hopkins, *Christ the Consoler,* p. 65.

69. ibid, p. 4.

70. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 131.

71. ibid, p. 135.

72. Hopkins, *Saved at Last !,* p. 4.

73. ibid, p. 7.

74. W. E. H. Lecky, *The History of European Morals,* p. 283, cited in Trudgill, *Madonnas and Magdalens,* p. 125.

75. Hopkins, cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins. A Memoir,* p. 87.

76. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 18.

77. Hopkins, "The World's Outcasts" (n.d.) published in *The Power of Womanhood,* pp. 171-4.

78. ibid, p. 173.

79. See Kruppa's "More sweet and liquid than any other", pp. 117-132.

80. ibid, p. 119.

81. ibid, pp. 126-8. It is interesting in the light of their friendship the differences between Hopkins and Cameron with regard to male and female symbolism. See also Mike Weaver, *Julia Margaret Cameron 1815-1879* (Boston, Massachussetts, 1984) p. 23 for a reading of Cameron as a theological feminist, and Weaver, "Julia Margaret Cameron, the stamp of divinity" in Weaver (ed.) *British Photography in the Nineteenth-Century* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 159.

82. See Yeo, "Social Motherhood", p. 75.

83. Mary Carpenter, "Women's work in the Reformatory Movement", *English Woman's Journal,* 1 (1858), pp. 291-2, cited in Yeo, "Social Motherhood", p. 75.

84. John Singleton, "The Virgin Mary and Religious Conflict in Victorian Britain", *Journal of Ecclesiastical History,* vol. 34, no. 1 (January, 1992), pp. 16-34.

85. ibid, pp. 28-34.

86. Hopkins, *Man and Woman; or, the Christian Ideal,* p. 5.

87. ibid, pp. 9-10.

88. ibid, p. 19.

89. ibid, p. 7.

90. Hopkins, *Christ the Consoler,* p. 229.

91. Mary Poovey, "Scenes of an Indelicate Character: The Medical Treatment of Victorian Women" in *Uneven Developments,* pp. 24-50.

92. ibid, p. 208, n.11.

93. See Vicinus, *Independent Women,* pp. 268-80.

94. Cited in Vicinus, *Independent Women,* p. 256.

95. Nightingale, *Cassandra,* p. 29.

96. Cited in Nancy Boyd, *Three Women Who Changed Their World,* p. 90.

97. Hopkins, *The Apocalypse of Evil,* p. 22.

98. ibid, p. 28.

99. ibid, p. 13.

100. Hopkins, *The Power of Womanhood,* p. 171.

101. Caroline Walker Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption,* pp. 27-51 for a discussion of the interaction between cultural expectations and medieval women's religious expression.

102. Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities,* p. 79.

103. Walker Bynum, *Fragmentation and Redemption,* p. 147.

Conclusion.

1. Cited in Barrett, *Ellice Hopkins: A Memoir,* pp. 248-9.

2. Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance,* p. 94.

3. DuBois and Gordon, "Seeking Ecstasy on the Battlefield", p. 20. See also Mary Ryan, "The Power of Female Networks", pp. 82-3.

4. See Bland, *Banishing the Beast,* pp. 312-14 and Showalter, *Sexual Anarchy,* pp. 36-7.

5. Judith Walkowitz and Judith Newton, "Preface", *Feminist Studies,* 9 (Spring, 1983), p. 4.

6. See for example the list of Christian texts suuplied by the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement, including titles such as Elizabeth Stuart, *Just Good Friends: Towards a Lesbian and Gay Theology of Relationships* (London: Mowbray, 1995); Adrian Thatcher and Elizabeth Stuart (eds.), *Christian Perspectives on Sexuality and Gender* (London: Gracewing, 1996); John Boswell, *The Marriage of Likeness: Same-Sex Unions in Premodern Europe* (New York: HarperCollins, 1994); James B. Nelson and Sandra Longfellow (eds.), *Sexuality and the Sacred: Sources for Theological Reflection* (London: Mowbray, 1994).

7. For a helpful appraisal of the basic themes in contemporary feminist theology see Ursula King, *Women and Spirituality;* Anne Carr, *Transforming Grace: Christian Tradition and Women's Experience* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1988); Carol P. Christ and Judith Plaskow, *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979) and Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk: Toward a Feminist Theology* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1983).

8. See my "Race and the appeal to experience in feminist theology: the challenge of the womanist perspective", *Modern Believing,* vol. XXXVI, no. 2, (April, 1995), pp. 18-26; Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider* (California: Crossing Press, 1984) and Susan Thistlethwaite, *Sex, Race and God: Christian Feminism in Black and White,* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1990) for a discussion of the problematic status of women's experience and female solidarity.

9. See my "Feminist Approaches to the Study of Religion" in Peter Connolly (ed.) *Approaches to the Study of Religion,* (London, New York: Cassells, 1998 forthcoming).

10. See Rosemary Radford Ruether (ed.), *Religion and Sexism. Images of Woman in the Jewish and Christian Tradition* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974) and *New Woman. New Earth. Sexist Ideologies and Human Liberation* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975) for the earliest and most influential explanatory theories of the negative impact of Christian dualism upon women's status.

11. See Beverley Wildung Harrison, *Making the Connections: Essays in Feminist Social Ethics* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985); Katie Cannon, *Black Womanist Ethics* (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1988) and Linda Hogan, "Ethical Theory" in Isherwood and McEwan (eds.), *An A to Z of Feminist Theology,* pp. 56-9.

12. See Nancy Chodorow, *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender,* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978) and Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development,* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982).

13. Marilyn Chapin Massey, *Feminine Soul: The Fate of an Ideal,* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985), p. x.

14. See for example Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father. Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1974) and Daly, *Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical*

Feminism (Boston: Beacon Press, 1978).

15. Ursula King, *Women and Spirituality,* p.170.

16. Ruether, "Christology. Can a Male Savior Save Women?" in *Sexism and God-Talk,* pp. 116-38; Phyllis Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality,* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978); Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse,* (New York: Crossroad, 1993) and Sallie McFague, *Models of God: Theology for an Ecological, Nuclear Age,* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987).

17. King, *Women and Spirituality,* pp. 173-4.

18. See for example Ann Loades' comments in "Christ Also Suffered: why certain forms of holiness are bad for you", in Loades, *Searching for Lost Coins: explorations in Christianity and feminism* (London: SPCK, 1978), pp. 39-60.

19. See King, *Women and Spirituality,* p. 174 for a reference to the female "Christa", and Jacquelyn Grant, *White Women's Christ and Black Women's Jesus: Feminist Christology and Womanist Response* (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1988).

20. See Chapter 2 of this thesis.

21. See Chapter 2 for references to the spiritual autobiographies of these women.

22. Judy Chicago, "Our Heritage is Our Power" in C. Spretnak (ed.), *The Politics of Women's Spirituality: Essays on the Rise of Spiritual Power Within the Feminist Movement,* (New York: Doubleday, 1982), p. 156.

23. Hopkins, *The Present Moral Crisis,* p. 24.

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